

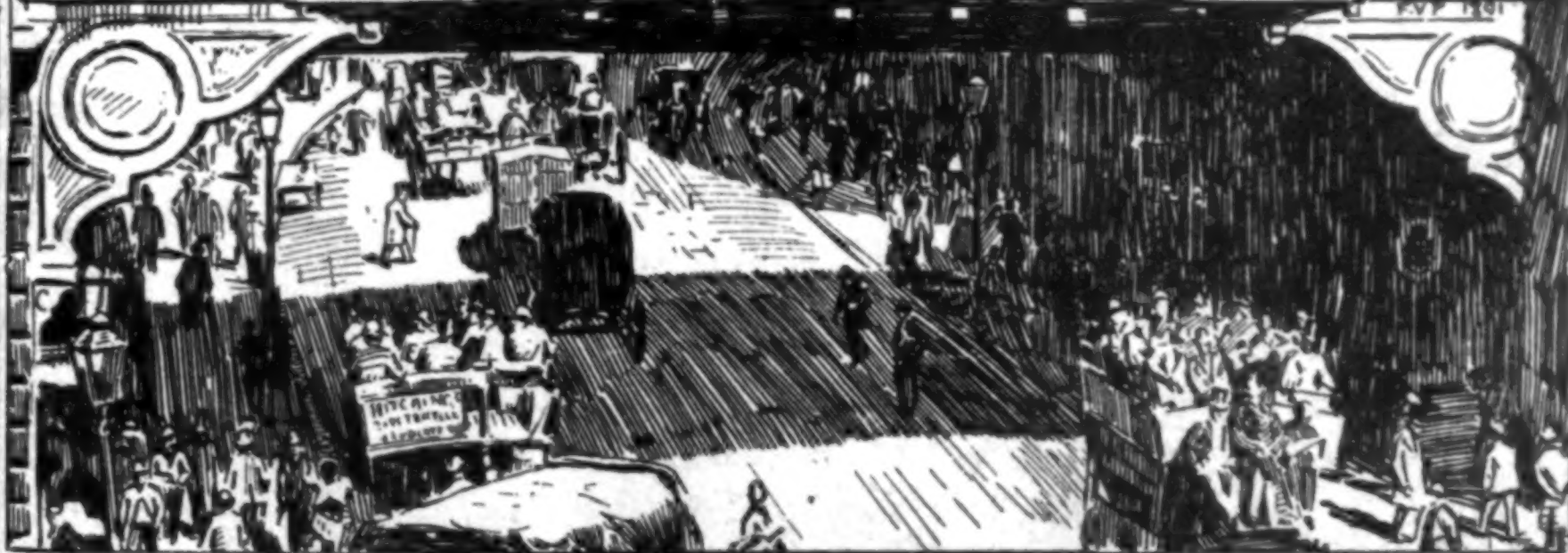
-THREE-PENCE-

The LUDGATE MONTHLY



Contributions
BY
GEORGE R. SIMS,
HAWLEY SMART,
HENRY HERMAN,
J. F. MOLLOY,
etc., etc.,
and Song by
Wm. M. HUTCHISON,
Composer of
"Khen on the Rhine,"
"Dream Faces," &c.

80 ILLUSTRATIONS



No. 3, Vol. 2.

Published at 4 & 5, CREED LANE,
LUDGATE HILL, LONDON, E.C.

January, 1892.

FLORILINE

FOR THE TEETH & BREATH.

Is the BEST LIQUID DENTIFRICE in the World.

Prevents the Decay of the Teeth.

RENDERS THE TEETH PEARLY WHITE.

Removes all Traces of Tobacco Smoke.

Is partly composed of Honey, and Extracts from Sweet Herbs and Plants.

IS PERFECTLY HARMLESS & DELICIOUS TO THE TASTE.



Of all Chemists and Perfumers throughout the World, 2s. 6d. per Bottle.

FLORILINE TOOTH POWDER

Put up in Glass Jars, Price 1s.

THE ANGLO-AMERICAN DRUG COMPANY, Ltd.,
33, FARRINGDON ROAD, LONDON, Proprietors.

Cleaver's Juvenia Soap

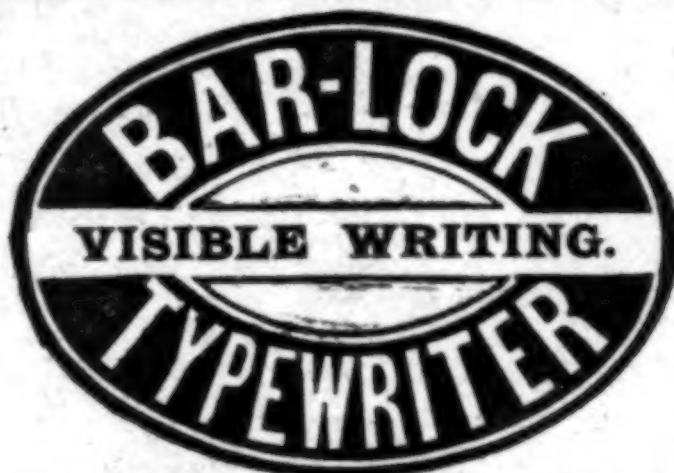
Marvellous Effect!!

Preserves and Rejuvenates the Complexion.

£200 to be Given Away in Prizes.
Send stamped and directed Envelope for
particulars to
F. S. CLEAVER & SONS,
82 to 84, Red Lion St., Holborn, London.

WHY?

Was the BAR-LOCK
Awarded the
ONLY GOLD MEDALS,
at Edinburgh, 1890,
at Jamaica, 1891.



WHY?

Were we Appointed
by Special Warrant
Writing Machine
Makers to
H.M. THE QUEEN.

SEND FOR OUR CATALOGUE, READ IT, YOU WILL UNDERSTAND THE REASON.

THE TYPE WRITER COMPANY, LIMITED, 12 and 14, Queen Victoria Street, London, E.C.
MANCHESTER: 25, Market Street. LIVERPOOL: 1, South John Street. GLASGOW: 22, Renfield Street.

RHEUMATIC AFFECTIONS

Nervous Exhaustion, Impaired Vitality, Torpid Liver, Indigestion, Constipation, Hysteria, Internal Weakness, Kidney Disease, &c.,

Yield like magic to the invigorating properties of Mild Galvanic Currents imperceptibly applied to the system by simply wearing

HARNESSES

(Galvanic
and
Faradic.)

ELECTROPATHIC BELT.

(By
Royal
Letters
Patent.)

It has cured thousands of sufferers in all parts of the world. It is light and comfortable to wear, and may be relied upon to impart **Health, Strength, and Vigour** to the debilitated constitution.

RHEUMATISM.

Mrs. MORGAN, 30, Pond Street, Cachar, Dowlais, writes, April 24, 1891: "Having worn your Electropathic Abdominal Belt constantly since the beginning of January, I am very pleased to state that my health is very much improved. I hope that your numerous patients will derive the same benefit from your Belts as I have experienced, and I shall with pleasure recommend your appliances to my friends."

KIDNEY DISEASE.

HENRY CHARLES, Esq., Milbury House, Fawcett Road, Southsea, writes, Feb. 23, 1891: "Since wearing your Electropathic Belt, I am pleased to say I am much better in every respect. Before purchasing it, I suffered from STONE AND KIDNEY DISORDER for fifteen years. I then went under an operation for Stone, in the Royal Portsmouth Hospital, at Southsea; the stone weighed 2½ ozs. I am thankful to tell you that I am quite satisfied with the Belt, and MY BACK IS VERY MUCH STRONGER since wearing it than it has been for years."



NEURALGIA.

Miss S. ROWE, Duppas Terrace, Croydon, writes, Mar. 18, 1891:—"Since adopting your Electropathic Belt, and carrying out your local treatment, I am thankful to say I am so much better—for I have suffered greatly. Not a minute's pain have I had since the arrival of the Belt, and I have worn it constantly. I am looking and feeling so well, and my friends are remarking 'how is it you do not appear so haggard and worn?' The menstrual period is much better, also the Leucorrhoea. I only wish I had tried the treatment before, instead of taking so much medicine."

TO SUFFERERS.

Those who cannot call and avail themselves of a free personal consultation should write at once for particulars.

PAMPHLETS FREE.

MEDICAL BATTERY Co., Ltd.,

CONSULTATION FREE.

52, OXFORD STREET, LONDON, W.

Cheques and Postal Orders should be crossed "London and County Bank."

A WONDERFUL CASE

MR. J. E. TAYLOR, 13, Sutton Street, Holloway Head, Birmingham, writes, March 2nd, 1891:—"I have commenced wearing my new Electropathic Belt, and am much pleased with it. My previous one I wore daily for two years, during which time I travelled through America, British Colombia, Japan, China, East Indies, and South Africa, and as I have worn it when performing on the stage at night, it has had some rough usage at times, and considering the intense heat of the climates I have been in, I think it has lasted wonderfully well. When I first began wearing the **ELECTROPATHIC BELT**, in December, 1885, I was suffering from Renal Calculi, Nervous Exhaustion, and Dyspepsia. I took it in sheer desperation, hoping that it might do me some good, but not having much faith in it, and in about three weeks time I found that I could run upstairs; hitherto I had crawled up, holding on to the banisters. I then began to give it a fair trial. I gave up taking medicine of any description, and trusted entirely to my Belt, and now, at the age of 61, I am a strong, hearty man, suffering from neither ache or pain, and able to eat and digest anything. I dare say you have a great many testimonials in regard to their excellence, but if a word from me is of any utility, you can make any use of my letter you think fit."

All in search of health should follow this gentleman's example, and procure one of these world-famed health appliances, and wear it regularly. One thousand recent original Testimonials may be seen at the Electropathic and Zander Institute, 52, OXFORD STREET, LONDON, W., where Mr. C. B. HARNESSES (President), and the Medical Battery Company's other officers, may be consulted without charge, either personally or by letter. Those who cannot call should write at once.

Pamphlet and Book of Testimonials.



STILL TRUE TO HIS COLOURS.

WEARY RAGGLES: What has become of Lazy Luke?

TIRED TATTERS: He's at work.

"Horrors!"

"He's at work trying to perfect a labour-saving machine"

"Oh!"

READ THIS FACT.

94, Commercial Road, Peckham, July 12, 1889.

"Dear Sir,—I am a poor hand at expressing my feelings on paper, but I should like to thank you, for your lozenges have done wonders for me in relieving my terrible cough. Since I had the operation of 'Tracheotomy' (the same as the late Emperor of Germany, and unlike him, thank God, I am still alive and getting on well) performed at St. Bartholomew's Hospital for abduct, or paralysis of the vocal chords, no one could possibly have had a more violent cough; indeed it was so bad at times that it quite exhausted me. The mucus also, which was very copious and hard, has been softened, and I have been able to get rid of it without difficulty."

Mr. T. Keating.

I am, Sir, yours truly,
J. HILL.

MEDICAL NOTE.

The above speaks for itself. From strict inquiry it appears that the benefit from using Keating's Cough Lozenges is understated. The operation was a specially severe one, and was performed by the specialist, Dr. H. T. Butlin, of St. Bartholomew's Hospital. Since the operation, the only means of relief is the use of these Lozenges. So successful are they that one affords immediate benefit, although from the nature of the case the throat irritation is intense. Mr. Hill kindly allows any reference to be made to him.

THE UTTERLY UNRIVALLED REMEDY FOR COUGHS, HOARSENESS AND THROAT TROUBLES.

"Keating's Cough Lozenges" are sold everywhere, in Tins, 1/1½ and 2/9 each.
Free by Post, 15 Stamps.

THOS. KEATING, CHEMIST, LONDON.



TO GET RID OF WORMS IN CHILDREN, USE KEATING'S WORM TABLETS.

A PURELY VEGETABLE SWEETMEAT, both in appearance and taste, furnishing a most agreeable method of administering the only certain remedy for **INTESTINAL OR THREAD WORMS**. It is a perfectly Safe and Mild Preparation, and is especially adapted for Children.

Sold in Tins, 1/1½ each, by all Chemists. Free by Post, 15 Stamps.

THOMAS KEATING, Chemist, Bride Lane, London.



A REGULAR SPENDTHRIFT.

SIGNOR NEAPOLI: Jocketto musta bea getta rich.
Longa time inside.

JOCKO (depositing his last halfpenny): I s'pos
I'll get toko, but it's lots of fun.

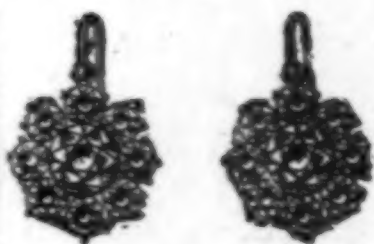
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Earrings, 21s. pair.



Clear set in Solid
Gold, 18s. 6d.



The Ears do not require
Piercing for these Ear-
rings, 25s. pair.



Scarf Pin set
in Gold, 10s.,
with Stud,
12s. 6d.



Collar Stud,
Gold, 12s.

ROSE

Price, 30s.
Any Name to Order.



New Brooch, 25s.
Great Variety in Stock.



Brooch, 10s. 6d.



Pin and
Stud, 21s.



Gold, 8s.



Gold, 25s.



Gold, 21s.



Gold, 26s.



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The FAULKNER DIAMOND, being a hard Crystal, will stand any amount of wear, is most beautifully cut and faceted by the first lapidaries of the day. The purity and dark rich fire of these stones are unsurpassable, and infinitely superior to many expensive real gems of inferior quality. The great reputation of the FAULKNER DIAMOND is now well known all over the world. The stones are set in gold and silver by most experienced setters, and can be mounted side by side with the finest brilliants. They are patronised for Court and all great occasions. Thousands of testimonials can be seen from all parts of the world. The public are cordially invited to inspect the marvellous selection now on view, which we guarantee will surpass most sanguine expectations.

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ARTHUR FAULKNER, { TWO DOORS FROM } 167 & 90, REGENT STREET, LONDON, W.

MR. C. B. HARNESS' ELECTROPATHIC TREATMENT.

Mr. C. B. HARNESS' treatment becomes more popular every day. It is now largely patronised and strongly recommended by the nobility of England, as well as the leading physicians, barristers, military officers, clergymen, and all classes of society. It has proved marvellously successful in the speedy relief and cure of the following ailments, frequently after every other form of treatment has been tried and fortunes spent in physic without success :—

*Nervous Exhaustion, Chronic Dyspepsia,
Torpid Liver, Impaired Vitality,
Acute Rheumatism (constitutional and acquired), Lumbago,
Sciatica, Gout, Sleeplessness, Kidney Troubles,
Hysteria, Loss of Appetite, Varicocele, Organic Disorders,
Ladies' Ailments, Weak Back, &c.*

Sufferers from any of the above-mentioned complaints should at once stop taking poisonous drugs and quack medicines, and either call at

The Electropathic and Zander Institute,
52, OXFORD STREET, LONDON, W.,

And avail themselves of a free personal consultation, or write to-day for particulars.

THOUSANDS OF TESTIMONIALS RECEIVED. PAMPHLETS FREE.



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STRANGER (in a little town on the Sound): This is just the kind of a sleepy place I've been looking for. Nobody seems to care about the business of anybody else. By the way, there seems to be a general liking here for bottle glass in the window panes.

GIVE-AWAY NATIVE: Them's operry glasses.

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A WORD TO BUSINESS MEN.



You cannot afford to do your writing in the old way.

Our New Model Machine has been adopted in all the Departments of the Government service,

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BLACK LEAD.**

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PRODUCED IMMEDIATELY
WITHOUT WASTE OR DUST.
IN 1d. 2d. & 4d. PACKETS — EVERYWHERE
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IMMEDIATELY ON CUTLERY,
WITHOUT WEAR, FRICTION OR DUST
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Superior Long Cloth and
Fine Irish Linen, 4-fold,
4/6 each,
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6 for 26/-



This is a well-known marvel in point of value, being equal to and more comfortable in fit than any high-priced Shirt.

Sample in Show-cases at most Railway Stations. Length of Sleeve and Size of Collar all that is necessary to ensure a perfect fit.

The PERFECT SHIRT is now worn in every part of the habitable globe, and can be had in different styles, as under:—

The LINCOLN, with wide front and for one stud, and round wrists for dress; stud or button at back of neck.

The BROOKLYN, with wide front and for one stud, and narrow wrists and stud-hole for cuff.

The LUDGATE, for three front studs and usual wrists.

Open at back or front, for ordinary wear.

The TEMPLE, with wide front and for one stud, and square wrists for dress.

Open at back or front.

The CIRCUS, for three front studs and narrow wrists, and stud-hole for cuff.

Open at back or front, for business wear.

The MONARCH, with wide front and for three studs, and square wrists for dress.

Open at back or front.

The COURT, with stud-hole at back in place of button.

The BRITON, as the Temple, but cut for short arms.

The DEFIANCE, with wide front and for three front studs, and deep round wrists for dress.

The ALLIANCE, with Pique Front and cuffs.

The ADAPTABLE, for three studs and usual wrists, but cut for short arms.

Open at back or front.

Send P.O. 4s. 6d. for Sample Shirt.

SHIRTS REFRONTED, WRISTS and COLLAR banded, 3s., ready for use. Extra quality.

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SHIRT AND COLLAR MAKERS,

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E.C.

THE APPROVED REMEDY
OF THE AGE

Alcock's Masters Porous Plasters

are the best.

USE THEM FOR
SPRAINS, STRAINS.
& PAINS

OF EVERY
DESCRIPTION



ALSO IN
BRONCHITIS, ASTHMA, COUGHS & COLDS

The 'REV. MARK GUY PEARSE says:—

“We have found them a very breast-plate against
Coughs, Colds, &c.”

COLDS AND CHILLS.

THEIR INFLUENCE ON THE BLOOD.

Decomposition of Waste Matters in the Blood, by giving birth to both animal and vegetable life in its most minute forms, as often originates from a chill or congestion as from any other cause. The chill may pass away, but the disease germ or acid is too frequently left behind, and does a deal of mischief.

Moreover, it may be taken as an axiom that in the blood of every one of us there are sleeping germs of disease, which only waken to life under certain unhealthy conditions favourable to them, but hurtful to us. A cold or chill frequently wakens an old disease, or a hereditary tendency to a specific complaint, by causing certain unhealthy changes and decomposition in the blood.

It may seem strange that the same primary cause may originate many seemingly different complaints, but, nevertheless, it is so. No two persons are exactly alike in constitutions; every person has some special tendency or predisposition to one or more particular complaints. This may be the result of hereditary tendency, climatic surroundings—either now or in earlier life—diet, previous illnesses, &c. The broad fact remains, however, that originating in the blood, they must be treated by a medicine dealing with the circulation. For this purpose there is no remedy so really valuable and yet so simple and safe as "Frazer's Sulphur Tablets."

It is sometimes difficult to understand why a seemingly so simple remedy as "Frazer's Sulphur Tablets" can do so much real good. In essence the reason is that they sap a complaint by degrees and little by little, day by day, expel a portion of the seed and germ, or acid of the disease. And so gently is this done that it is almost imperceptible, except by the patient's gradually improving condition.

"Frazer's Sulphur Tablets" carry an antiseptic purifying power into the blood where it is most needed. And there is no other medicine that has the same double power of purification and expulsion in the same degree as "Frazer's Sulphur Tablets."

It is as if, in a garden full of weeds, they first pulled up the weeds by the roots, and then gathered them together and destroyed them, lest the weeds might take root again.

The safety and virtue of "Frazer's Sulphur Tablets" are further demonstrated by their action in persons suffering from constipation, or of constipated habit of body. The usual pills and cathartic medicine excite an undue performance of peristaltic force, in other words, cause a spasmodic increase of the vermicular or wormlike writhings of the intestines, by which nature expels food refuse. But nature resents shocks, so that afterwards the action becomes more inert than before, and the complaint returns, and needs the constant resort to purgatives to effect what is required.

"Frazer's Sulphur Tablets," on the other hand, are a gentle laxative acting by tonic power in the blood-vessels. They do not excite force, they merely enable the natural functions to do their own work by relieving the blood vessels which control the vermicular action of clogged matters and impurities which impair their usefulness.

"Frazer's Sulphur Tablets," on the other hand, neither create piles nor intensify the constipation—they relieve and benefit both. They are not, however, a purgative; they won't act in three or four hours in the violent manner to which you have been accustomed after using strong pills, and which you have thought to be good, but which, in reality, make the complaint worse. But gradually "Frazer's Sulphur Tablets" will put matters right, and will not injure any function whatever, and this applies as much to women and children as to men. Moreover, they will in the worst cases do great good, and are the safest and pleasantest of all preventive remedies for the army of those whose sedentary habits of life or business methods predispose them to constipated habits of body. Most dwellers in cities need the occasional aid of a gentle aperient, and in "Frazer's Sulphur Tablets" is to be found the safest and best of all.

TEST THEM FREE OF CHARGE.

Samples of "Frazer's Sulphur Tablets" will be sent gratis and post free on application to Frazer's Tablets, Limited, 11, Ludgate Square, E.C. Write your name and address clearly and legibly, and name the "*Ludgate Monthly*."

"Frazer's Sulphur Tablets" are put up in packets, price 1s. 1½d. (post free 1s. 3d.), and are for sale by most chemists and medicine vendors. Every packet bears our name and address, and has a Government medicine stamp affixed. "Frazer's Sulphur Tablets" are pleasing to the eye, pleasant to the taste, and are guaranteed safe and pure. In health they keep the blood pure, ensure a good complexion, and ward off disease. In sickness they mitigate suffering, and have great curative efficacy.

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'HARLENE'



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HAIR PRODUCER
AND
RESTORER.

*Positively forces Luxuriant
Hair, Whiskers and
Moustachios to grow heavily
in a few weeks, without
injury to the skin, and no
matter at what age.*



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The World-renowned Remedy for **BALDNESS** from whatever cause arising. As a PRODUCER of WHISKERS and MOUNTACHIOS it has never been equalled. As a CURE for WEAK or THIN EYELASHES, or RESTORING GREY HAIR TO ITS ORIGINAL COLOUR, NEVER FAILS.

Physicians and Analysts pronounce it to be perfectly harmless, and devoid of any Metallic or other injurious ingredients.

1s., 2s. 6d., 3s. 6d., and 5s. 6d. per bottle, from Chemists, Hair Dressers, and Perfumers all over the World, or sent direct, on receipt of 1s. 4d., 2s. 10d., 3s. 11d., and 6s. Postal Orders preferred.

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The Oldest Established Firm of Ladies' Tailors in the Kingdom, with the LATEST NOTIONS, and what is all-important in these days, the MOST ECONOMICAL CHARGES.—*Vide Press.*

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Messrs. HOARE & SONS are now exhibiting in their RECENTLY ENLARGED SHOW ROOMS attractive Novelties for the Coming Season, exclusively designed and Manufactured for their House alone.

Riding Habits, for Park or Country, with Patent Safety Skirt, from 4½ to 10 guineas.

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The New "Combination" Patent Safety Habit (Habit and Trousers combined). Made to order, from the New Rain (but not Air) Proof Cloths, from 6½ guineas.

Covert Coats, from the New Rain Proof Cloths, from 2½ guineas.

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Long Coats and Ulsters, from 3½ guineas.

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XMAS ANNUAL,
WITH
COLOURED PLATE,
PRICE THREEPENCE.**



A USELESS INVENTION.

MRS. ROONEY—Yez can tek thot inshtalment
sewin'-machine back phere yez got it.

MR. ROONEY—Oi t'ought it would plaze yez.

MRS. ROONEY—It do not. I pit yure Sunday
orceches in th' top av it lasht night, an' sorra th
patch it pit on thim in tin hours.



A PLUCKY G'RL.

MISS BIRDSEYE: Goodness! What is the mat-
ter with your foot?

MISS TAIKE: Verdy Jalousie dared me to walta
just once with the Baron Huffnagol last night.

WOOLLEN BLANKETS SUPERSEDED BY CELLULAR SHEETS AND COUNTERPANES.

Combining Complete Ventilation and Perfect Warmth.

CELLULAR DRESS & DAY SHIRTS, NIGHT SHIRTS, PYJAMAS, UNDERWEAR for BOTH SEXES, CORSETS, &c.

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FROM the earliest days of medicinal science, no antidote has achieved such a reputation as **BEECHAM'S PILLS.**

Their fame has reached the uttermost parts of the earth, their curative power is universally acknowledged to a degree unprecedented in the annals of physical research; they stand forth pre-eminent to the world for their health-restoring and life-giving properties, being the most marvellous medicine yet discovered for Bilious and Nervous Disorders, Sick Headache, Indigestion, and all Derangements of the Liver; and for suffering Females are—

*"A priceless boon, a treasure more than wealth;
The banisher of pain, the key to health."*

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WORTH A GUINEA A BOX.



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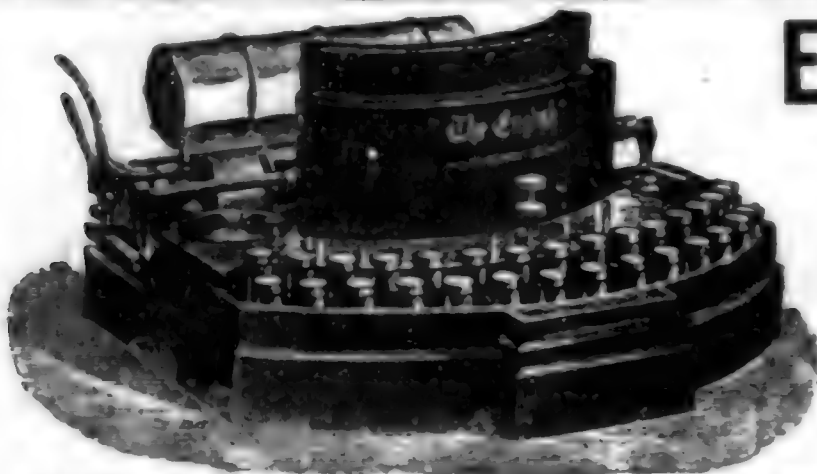
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THE LUDGATE MONTHLY.

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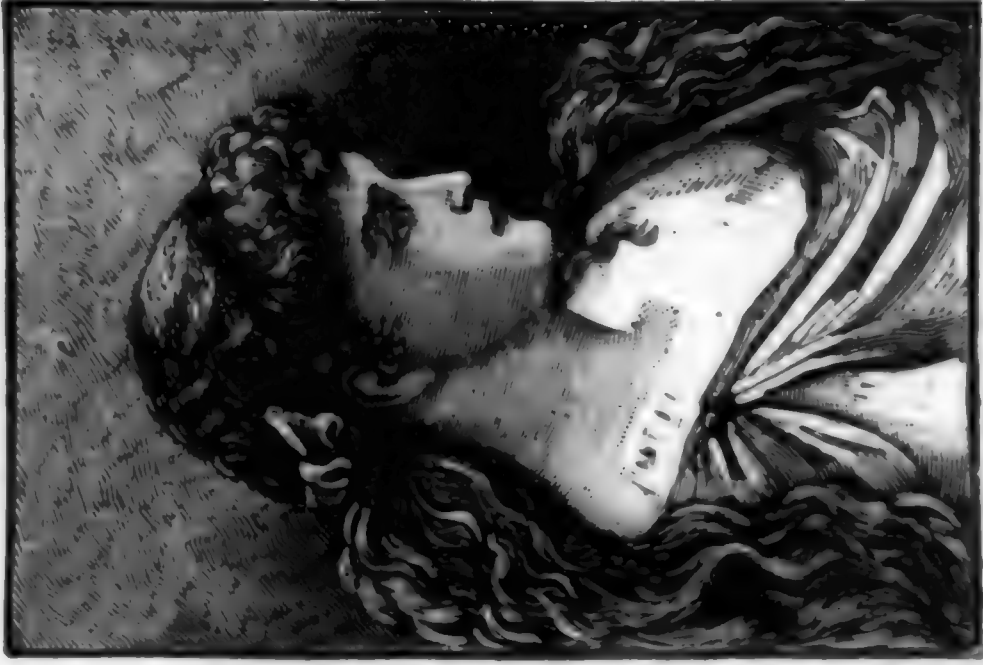
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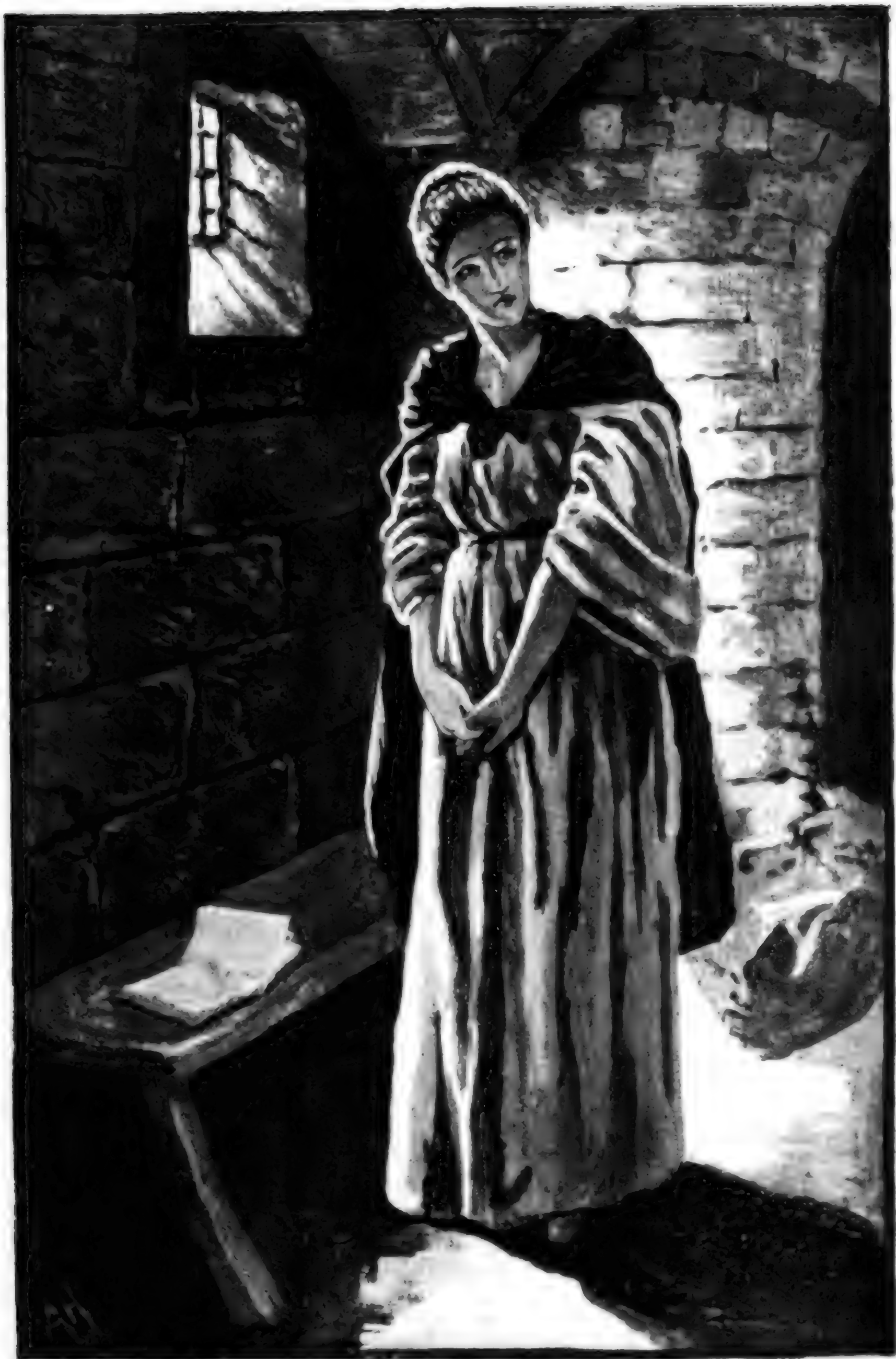
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"LADY OGILVY THOUGHT OF THE HOME WHERE SHE HAD KNOWN HAPPY DAYS."



It would be difficult to say when the sun rose or set that cheerless day. From early morning the sky had been overcast by grey clouds from which thin drizzling rain fell incessantly. No ray pierced the general gloom, no sound broke the sombre silence, the atmosphere weighed heavily on the soul. And now as the dull afternoon light melted into the darkness of coming night, pale mists rose and gathered slowly and weirdly from the solitary wayless moorlands surrounding the Stirlingshire home of Lord Ogilvy.

Standing solitary and sad by one of the long narrow drawing-room windows of Stirling Castle, Lady Ogilvy gazed with wearied eyes across the wild and desolate waste, until gradually but perceptibly it seemed to her the gathering vapours took the shape and form of long and endless lines of an army, marching with tireless limbs and noiseless tread out of the space around into the darkness beyond. All day depression had dwelt with her, suspense had strung her nerves, anxiety had sunk her heart. And as she looked at the rising film she wondered if imagination played her false, or if indeed this sight of spectral soldiers was a foreshadowing of those who might be slain, vouchsafed to her, the daughter of Highland chiefs, the wife of a

Highland laird, in virtue of the hereditary gift of second sight possessed by her family.

For times were troubled and homes were threatened. Only nine months before, in July 1745, whilst George II was visiting his beloved Hanover, and Scotland was almost free from military surveillance, Prince Charles Edward Stuart sometimes called the Pretender, set sail from Nantes in company with the Marquis of Tullibardine and a few devoted followers, with whom he landed in the bay of Lochnanaugh, when he marched to Kinlochmoidart where the Highland clans loyal to his cause were summoned to rise. Ten days later his standard floated proudly above his camp at Glenfinnan, and at the head of a large body of hardy and faithful mountaineers, ready for fair fight, and willing to meet death, he proceeded southwards.

Success seemed to favour his just cause, for at Perth he was joined by Lord Strathallan and the Duke of Perth, leading their clans, and, approaching Edinburgh, the city surrendered, when Charles Edward Stuart held state in the home of his ancestors. His next move was to venture over the border, believing Englishmen were tired of their German ruler who cared nothing for their country, and was unable to speak their language; but disappointment awaited him, for the recruits that joined him were few, and going back to Penrith he was defeated there by the King's second son William Duke of Cumberland. Still, joined by the Duke of Perth and Lord Strathallan, Prince Charles Edward made his way to Stirling, "the grey bulwark of the North," and there prepared to encounter the Duke of Cumberland's troops on Culloden Moor.

The daughter of chiefs who had fought and fallen for the Stuart race, Lady Ogilvy's heart was enlisted in the cause of the handsome and gallant prince who sought to gain his ancestral throne. Had she been a man she would have been one of the first in the field, ready and willing to fight and fall for the hero she enthusiastically worshipped, for the prince she loved; but as a woman she was powerless to help him, unable to inspire her husband with her fervour, impotent to persuade him to join the Stuarts' forces.

She listened on this April afternoon to the bell in the great tower ringing out four o'clock in dismal and knell-like notes, and then waited with raised head as if expecting to hear approaching footsteps. But sheer silence reigning undisturbed, she clasped her hands athwart her heart as if striving to subdue her impatience, and gazed once more across the bleak black moors. There as before, marching slowly onwards, was the white, filmy procession of armed men looking so clear and distinct that she would fain persuade herself they were some faithful clan on their way to join the prince. But a glance at their shadowy columns and wavering lines dispelled this hope, and with a sickening heart and sinking spirit she turned from the window, drew a thick curtain between her and this weird sight, and called aloud for lights.

A grey-haired wrinkled-faced old servitor, clad in a livery somewhat tarnished and faded by time and wear, brought in the massive silver candelabra bearing many candles, which he set upon a central table.

Then before withdrawing he with a timid air looked at his mistress's pale and beautiful face, with its wide noble forehead, sweet blue eyes, and soft masses of auburn hair.

"Any news, David?" she asked.

"Na, me ledy; but you jist look as white as if you'd seen a ghaist."

"Perhaps I have," she murmured.

"Laird bless an' save us," he replied, glancing at her once more.

"Listen!" she said suddenly as she raised a finger to enjoin silence.

"I hurd nothing, me ledy," he answered, after a pause, looking round with a frightened air.

"But I do," she cried out, the colour coming to her cheeks, a light beaming in her eyes. "Go to the court-yard David, and bring my kinsman straight here; he comes from the camp."

As the servant disappeared she listened with eager attention to the measured beat of a horse's hoofs drawing nearer

and nearer until they trod upon the flint paved court below. Then she advanced to the open door and in another minute greeted Robert Macdonald. He took her hands and kissed them affectionately.

"I thought you would never come, cousin," she said with feverish impatience. "What news do you bring?"

"The Prince is well and hopeful: the men are faithful and brave."

"These are good tidings," she replied, with a sigh of relief. "You think the day will be ours."

"Our fate rests with God alone. The Duke of Cumberland's army numbers three times our own—we want more men."

"Is it possible that a Stuart must lack soldiers to fight his battles?" she asked, an expression of disdain curling her lips.

"Where's James?" Robert Macdonald inquired as if in answer to her question.

"I haven't seen him since morning. He grows weary with me because I never cease urging him to join the Prince."

"And he still refuses you, Margaret?"

"Here he comes to answer for himself," she said with a sigh, as Lord Ogilvy entered the room.

Over six feet high, sinewy and broad-chested; his face strong in outline, dark in complexion, and noble in expression, Lord Ogilvy was a remarkably handsome man. As he saw Robert Macdonald his brows slightly contracted, and his greeting was not over friendly.



A GREY-HAIRED OLD SERVITOR.

"I have heard," he said in a deep voice, "that the government has offered thirty thousand pounds for the Prince's head."

"And he," replied Robert Macdonald with a smile, "not to be outdone in generosity, has offered the same sum for the apprehension of the Elector of Hanover, whom the English call king."

"There's no hope for Charles Edward."

"Whilst life is left and loyalty exists, there's hope," answered Macdonald.

"But look at the odds against the Prince."

"Only for such men as you James Ogilvy, the odds would be on our side," answered Macdonald hotly.

"And only for such men as you, this unhappy country would be at peace," replied Lord Ogilvy. "Think of the lives Charles Edward Stuart has wasted already, and is willing to sacrifice to-morrow or next day in a hopeless fight. What is he with his handful of men, without proper ammunition, discipline, or leaders, against the trained and powerful army he would fight?"

"And yet all your sympathy is with the Prince," said his wife.

"Certainly," he admitted. "But all my reason shows that his is a lost cause."

"Not lost yet, James; enthusiasm may supply the place of numbers. There's not a man in all Scotland whose heart is not with him, though many hold back through fear. Let him but win Culloden and the whole country will flock round his banner," said Macdonald.

"I know, dear, and so does Robert, that it's not fear which keeps you back, but unwillingness to lead others to banishment or death," exclaimed Lady Ogilvy looking at her husband with proud eyes, "but you must think of the cause."

"Which I tell you is hopeless, Margaret."

"Your ancestors and mine fought, bled, and died for

the Stuarts, and will you hold back now, when the last of that noble race strives to regain his own. Even if the cause be hopeless, the more glorious it will be for you to join it; but I deny that it is hopeless; for God who protects the right, will lead our Prince to victory."

Her eyes flashed, her colour heightened, and her heart beat fast. Her husband came close, and placing one arm around her, kissed her fondly.

"Happy the man who has such an advocate," he said.

"And yet you resist me," she answered, raising her eyes to his.

"One word from you and your clan will follow you to the field," exclaimed Macdonald.

"The only reason which has kept me back. Such a step on my part may make widows and orphans of those who are now contented wives and happy children."

"But they are all anxious to fight, and only await their leader; if you don't go with them they will march under me to-morrow morning," Robert Macdonald cried out.

"Is this surmise or fact?"

"Fact. I have visited and spoken with them for the past week; to-night they will meet me at Faranaugh Glen. Come and see for yourself, man. Come and take your proper place as their laird, and help to strike a blow for your king and your country."

"You have removed a weight from my mind," said Lord Ogilvy.

"You will lead them?" asked his wife joyously.

"Yes. My heart has been in the cause, but I shrank from leading others towards what may prove their ruin or their death. Now that the responsibility no longer lies with me, I am eager to fight for our Prince, to give my life for him if needs be."

Lady Ogilvy threw her arms round his neck, and her face grew pale at his words.



ROBERT MACDONALD KISSED HER HAND.

What she had strongly desired was granted, and yet in the moment of her triumph, her woman's heart failed at the thought of what might be.

"You will not go alone dear, for I shall be with you," she said, nerving herself to feel brave and strong.

"You, Margaret?" her husband exclaimed, looking at her fondly.

"Yes, dear. No matter what happens I shall be by your side; it will be not only my duty but my glory and my pride."

"Then," said Robert Macdonald, "you will meet the men in the glen at midnight, and tell them you will lead them to the field, whilst I will hasten to our Prince and announce the good news."

On the 16th of April, 1746, William, Duke of Cumberland, leading the English troops, encountered Charles Edward Stuart and his army on Culloden Moor. At first the fight was furious, and the field was red with blood; but the contest was uneven, and in a brief while the brave Highlanders gave way to superior numbers. A little later and the Scotch fled, pursued by the English soldiers, who acting on their leader's orders, slaughtered every man on whom they laid hands, the Duke of Cumberland earning on this day the title, his father's subjects henceforth gave him, of "Billy the Butcher."



SHE BOUND HER HUSBAND'S WOUNDED ARM

Close beside a small, thickly planted wood, within a couple of miles from the fatal field, Lady Ogilvy sat on horseback whilst the battle was being fought, straining her eyes to watch the movements of the soldiery; the sound of cannon and the shouts of the victorious ringing in her ears. Her face was white to the lips, her heart heavy with grief and fear, and every now and then her hands gripped the reins tightly, as if she would rush forward and end her terrible suspense.

At last from out of the mass of confused figures scattering here and there, half covered with smoke, she saw a horseman speed across the field, and suddenly make for the wood. Her heart beat faster, for she knew her husband was keeping the appointment he made in case his worst fears were realized. As he rode up, his horse foaming at the mouth, and covered with perspiration, his head bare, one arm bleeding, one spur missing from his boots, she knew their cause was lost.

"Is it all over?" she gasped.

"All! We are defeated beyond recovery; it was madness to meet such an army."

"And the Prince?" she asked.

"Has already fled."

She dismounted quickly from her horse; he followed her example. With her handkerchief she bound his wounded arm; then taking from her saddle-bag a flask of whisky, handed it to him.

"Now, change saddles and mount my horse; he's fresh and fleet; and fly, my love," she cried.

"I cannot leave you here and alone," he answered.

"Brutes though they be, they will not harm a woman. There's no time to lose; escape to France, and pray God we shall meet there in safety one day."

He clasped her lovingly in his arms, kissed her again and again, and then jumping into the saddle, rode away. Through a mist of tears she watched his figure dash across the fields, gallop down the high road, and finally disappear a mere speck upon the horizon. Then a sense of loneliness and pain fell upon her; for it might be she would never see him more, and without him the whole world would be empty to her. But much time for melancholy thoughts was not left her, for suddenly she heard a rush of footsteps, a sound of cries and oaths, and looking up saw at some distance a Highlander pursued by three English soldiers. Instantly she sprang into the sad-

dle, determined to give him her horse if time allowed, or to stand between him and danger; but before she could reach, the man, already wounded and exhausted from loss of blood, fell; and ere he could recover himself, his pursuers falling on him with their bayonets, stabbed him again and again. He made no attempt to rise.

"Brutes!" she cried out, as she rode up, "you are butchers, not soldiers."

"Who have we here?" asked one of them, his bayonet still in his hand.

"A woman who does not fear you," she answered proudly.

"What's your name?"

"That you must find out," she replied, turning her horse's head away as if to depart.

"Not so fast," said a second soldier, seizing the bridle, his hands dripping with blood.

"You'll come with us, my pretty one."

"Let go, fellow," she cried, becoming conscious for the first time of her danger, and whipping up her horse; but the animal, worn out by the fatigue he had undergone, was unable to rush away from his captors, and she saw escape was impossible.

"You're a pretty prize, and I dare say our colonel will be glad to receive you," a third of the fellows said with a leer.

"Lead me to him if you will, but hold your peace," she answered, and something in her look and tone forbade further liberties of speech from the men.

Lady Ogilvy was conducted to the camp, and from there to Edinburgh Castle. Here she was not alone, for the wives of many Scottish chiefs who had taken part in the rising were likewise imprisoned. But these were after a time released, she however, being detained; and, on her friends demanding her liberty, they were informed "that so much mischief being done by women taking an active part in the Stuart cause, and so many had incited their husbands to take the field,

who would otherwise have stayed quietly at home, that it was necessary to make an example amongst them, and Lady Ogilvy had been selected for that purpose."

Imprisoned in this black and massive building, situated on a high dark rock rising above the town, she had much time for reflection; but regret for the part she had played never overtook her, and her courage never once forsook her. The apartment she was allowed to occupy was large and lofty, cheerless and cold; a heavy stone arched ceiling frowned upon her, the thick iron bars outside her window

reminded her of captivity.

Times there were when with eyes dimmed with tears, and cheeks pale with grief, she thought of the husband she loved so well, of the home where she had known happy days, of the child who might never again climb upon her knees, lay his cheek beside her own, whisper his words of love into her ears. All that was past, and the future was yet an uncertainty and a blank.

As such sad thoughts dwelt in her mind one gray and gloomy afternoon, the heavy bolts of the door shot back, and a woman entered the room carrying with her a basket holding newly washed linen. Her face was strong, pale, and freckled, her hair red, and as she crossed the apartment she limped awkwardly.

"I suppose these are my clothes," Lady Ogilvy said gently.

"I'm veri derf, me leddy, an nae guid for you tae speak till me," the woman shouted in a loud voice.

The prisoner was disappointed at not being able to hear any news from the outer world; but reflecting that the woman must have been selected because her affliction permitted no intercourse she went to the window, and gazed at the frowning sky and



"YOU ARE BUTCHERS, NOT SOLDIERS," SHE CRIED.

down at the dark roofs of the houses in the city beyond.

Meanwhile the laundress had laid aside her shawl and bonnet, and taking a sweeping brush began to clean the room. Suddenly Lady Ogilvy, moved by some strange attraction, turned round and saw the woman's eyes fixed on her with pity and sorrow.

"Hush!" she whispered, putting a finger on her lips as she looked over her shoulder towards the door, and then advancing to where the prisoner stood, said "I'm nae deaf, its only pretence, me leddy, that I may trick them as guards you, and help you tae flee."

Lady Ogilvy put out her hands in friendliness and gratitude, but instead of taking them the woman dived one of her own between the folds of the tartan wool handkerchief she wore across her breast, and produced a little slip of crumpled paper. The prisoner grasped it eagerly, and with trembling hands unfolded it and read the words:

"Your husband has escaped to France; the Prince is being hunted near and far, but has not yet been captured. Have courage; your friends are near you. Destroy this note when read.—R.M."

"Robert Macdonald," she said in a whisper; "he was ever faithful and true."

"Who gave you this?" Lady Ogilvy asked in a low voice.

"A puir beggar, me leddy," replied the woman, with a keen glance, "but one that ha muckle power to make me stone deif."

"It was he who thought of that?"

"Wha' beside? An' it's he will save you or die with you!"

"No, no," cried Lady Ogilvy; "tell him I forbid him to run any risks for me; say I am satisfied no matter what may befall me, and he must leave me to my fate."

During the following week Lady Ogilvy was tried for high treason, and sentenced to be executed. She heard the ominous words of her judge with calmness and composure.

"Were I a man it would have been my glory to have died for my king," she said in a clear firm voice, "but as it is, you have granted me a privilege I did not dare to expect."

The execution was fixed to take place three weeks from the day of her condemnation, and meanwhile she continued a prisoner in the castle, occupying the same apartment as before. All hope now left her; she knew the bitterness with which the English Government regarded the late rising, and the desire existing to make examples of those who had taken part in the rebellion, that terror might be struck in the hearts of the people. The country was still in a state of turmoil; refugees were hiding in the hills, waiting for a chance of escape to France; soldiers were hunting them throughout the land, whilst the city was thronged with the army. All day long sounds reached her ears of men marching, bugles blowing, drums beating, the garrisons being kept in a state of constant vigilance and excitement.

At the end of the week the laundress again entered Lady Ogilvy's apartment, and kissed the prisoner's hand.

"What news?" said the latter, in a tone that indicated all earthly tidings would henceforth hold no interest for her.

"He bade me say you were to keep a braw heart, me leddy."

"All is over now."

"Nay, dinna despair, me leddy; hi kens weel what's best for you, an' you must do as he bids."

"What is that?" asked the prisoner, with some interest.

"Get to limp like me," she replied in a whisper. "Ye can de it, me leddy, gin ye will, for ye are a canny chiel, an' your life may depend upon your deeing it well."

Lady Ogilvy heard her with amazement, the colour coming into her cheeks, a light flashing in her beautiful eyes.

"He means me to represent you, and make my escape?" she said, in a voice stirred by emotion.

"That's jist it; an' now begin."



THE LAUNDRESS.

"But if you are to take my place, they may punish you."

"What kin they de to a puir, ignorant body like me? Besides, I'd gladly suffer for you. Now, try it, me leddy, rest the toes an your left foot on the ground, and thrust out your knee; that's it; you'll do it weel in a short time."

Lady Ogilvy did as she was bidden, and limped up and down the room to the delight of her teacher.

"Lean a wee bit more forard, me leddy; that's better. Now you'll have a week to practise, an' when I coom again it will be late in the afternoon—towards dusk—then all will be ready and waitin' your escape. Keep a braw heart, an' mind you limp for an hour every day."

A week later and the laundress came once more, and for the last time with her basket of clothes. She had kept her word in delaying her visit as long as possible, so that it was now quite dusk, and the yellow oil lamps flickered faintly in the castle-yard below. Her face was paler than usual, her manner nervous, and her hands trembled as she laid down her basket, divested herself of her large shawl and big bonnet, and finally produced a wig made from her own hair.

"There be no time tae lose," she said, fastening her calico gown on Lady Ogilvy, and then fixing the red wig upon her head. "Let me see you walk, my leddy."

The prisoner limped up and down the room obediently.

"It's canny," the woman said, lost in admiration; "there's na one tha' wouldn't believe it was mysel'."

Lady Ogilvy smiled faintly; her heart was beating rapidly, though exteriorly she looked calm and self-contained. Once it seemed as if the room swam round her, and she tottered to the open window to gain fresh air. As she looked upwards towards the calm, peaceful sky, a flock of birds fled

past, and the thought came to her that in a few moments more she might be as free as they. How pitifully the faint stars looked down upon her from out the opal space; how peaceful seemed the world at large; the world from which the judgment of one man had bidden her soul go forth into that lone unknown land. A hand was laid upon her arm and she turned round with a start.

"Now me leddy you must awa'. When you leave this room tarn ta your right, an' go doon the flight o' windin' steepes; that 'ill bring you ta the yard. The gate be

straight afore you; walk doon the High Street, and there a freend 'ill meet you. Now, dinna forget ta limp, and may God speed you," the laundress said, kissing Lady Ogilvy's hand.

The prisoner threw her arms around the woman's neck and kissed the cheeks that were wet with tears. Then with a resolute air and a brave heart, she took up the empty basket and left her prison. She passed the guard in the corridor outside, he merely glancing at her face, half concealed by the big bonnet, went down the winding steps, and as she came into the court-yard drew a long breath of fresh air.

Beyond was the gate, and outside it lay liberty, but between her and it stood a group of soldiers, smoking and laughing. She dared not hesitate in her course or seem to avoid them, so taking her way resolutely, she approached them, limping heavily.

"Hullo, mother, is that you?" one of them cried, seizing hold of her basket. Her heart stood still, and she was about to reply, when another man said: "The old lady's as deaf as a post."

"Bet I'll make her hear me," exclaimed the first speaker, and placing a hand on her shoulder, and putting his mouth near her ear, he shouted: "You're my prisoner, and must come with me."

Lady Ogilvy looked at the gate, wondering for a second if she had better run, but



HULLO MOTHER, IS THAT YOU?"

the sight of the sentries and the knowledge that she could not outstrip her pursuers kept her still, and her face naturally assumed an expression of bewilderment as she looked at the soldiers.

"I told you she couldn't hear you," laughed one of them.

"I don't believe she's as bad as she pretends," the other answered.

"Come along old girl, I'll swear you're a blessed Jacobite, and no loyal subject of our king," he shouted. "We'll have some fun," he added to his companions as he placed his arm round her shoulders, and strove to lead her towards the castle.

Lady Ogilvy dared not speak lest her accent might betray her, and yet if she were to accompany them her disguise must soon be discovered and her design be betrayed. And such a little way lay between her and liberty; and so slight an action might lead her to death. She looked with troubled eyes at one of the men, who was little more than a boy.

"You frighten her; let her go," he said, in answer to her mute appeal.

"No; we'll have her into the guard room, and tell her she must be tried for high treason," the other replied, then shouted to her: "Come on, my traitor, I'll lock you up for the night."

With his strong arm around her, he led her forwards, all hope now crushed out of her soul, all dreams of liberty dying within her. But as they went, a bugle suddenly sounded.

"Supper, boys!" shouted one of the men, and with a laugh and a bound they rushed forward, leaving her alone.

She turned once more, made for the gate passed the sentries, and was safely outside the castle. Then quickening her pace, she

descended the hill and reached the High Street. As she walked down the thoroughfare, a man in the garb of a beggar stepped from the portal of a door, and going up to her said in a whisper: "Margaret, is it you?"

"It is I, Robert."

"Thank God," he exclaimed in the same low voice, adding: "Follow me,"

She limped after him down the street, on which the darkness of night was swiftly descending. Oil lamps, swung from the corners of houses, were suspended from ropes across narrow lanes, and gleamed faintly in the shops. Soldiers were hastening to their barracks, citizens passed to and fro. When Robert Macdonald and Lady Ogilvy

had arrived at an open space, they saw a couple of horses, saddled and ready for a journey. Without a word he lifted her into her saddle, bounded into his own, and silently and swiftly they sped forward and were soon lost in the shadows of night.

On being left alone the faithful laundress had got into Lady Ogilvy's bed and drew the clothes closely round her face; so that when the captain of the guard looked into the chamber, according to custom that night, he saw his prisoner as he believed, enjoying a sound sleep. Next morning she remained in bed, and breakfast was left upon a table; but during the day it was impossible to keep up the illusion. When the deception was discovered, and it was known Lady Ogilvy had escaped, she had already about eighteen hours' start of her pursuers, and before three days came and went, had safely reached France, where she was joyfully welcomed by her husband.



FAITHFUL AND BRAVE.

A STORY OF STRAWBERRY COURT. by Geo. Sims.



It was Christmas Eve in Strawberry Court. Strawberry Court! What a delicious aroma the very name of the place seems to suggest!

Alas! the Strawberry Court in which the scene of this story is laid had nothing about it to justify its name.

My Strawberry Court is (or rather was, for it has lately been pulled down) a dark and malodorous alley in a street leading out of the Mint. In such daylight as ever managed to creep down it, Strawberry Court looked only woe-begone, dirty, and poverty stricken; but when night had fallen and shadowy figures flitted in and out of it, it was a spot to raise a feeling of awe in the breast of the stoutest hearted stranger.

Strawberry Court was, for a long time, a modern Alsatia. Policemen hesitated to go down it alone, and in many of its wretched houses, thieves, and men with blood upon their hands, lay "snug," and laughed at the law.

This Christmas Eve matters were somewhat lively in Strawberry Court. An Irish lady, living at No. 14, had, in her cups, made use of language to an Irish lady at No. 17 which was anything but suggestive of the season of "peace on earth and good will to men," and the rival houses, No. 14 and No. 17, had instantly summoned their partisans to battle, and a free fight was soon raging all along the line.

When civil war raged in Strawberry Court the ordinary rules of civilized warfare were not always followed. From the advantageous position offered by an upstairs window, ladies would sometimes hurl down upon the combatants below, such unconsidered trifles as half bricks, old baskets, and damaged frying pans. It would not be well, even had I the necessary command of the Anglo-Irish language, for me to reproduce here the cries and exclamations with which the leaders of the rival houses rallied their partisans. It will be sufficient for my purpose to say that the shrieks, and yells, and exclamations, rose above the din of battle, and that the lady combatants shrieked the loudest.

It was not a pretty spectacle; to people who were not accustomed to it, it was a horrible one, and it was no wonder that a pale-faced young woman, with a little girl clinging to her skirt, stopped and gave a cry of terror as she turned into the court and found herself suddenly in the midst of the battle.

Her cry was drowned in the torrent of invective that was being poured out on all sides, but a stalwart, grey-headed old woman caught sight of her white face, on which a dim ray of light was shed by the lamp post at the top of the court, and suddenly letting go the hair of another lady which she was tugging at vigorously, she made a wild dash for the top of the court and took the pale-faced young woman by the hand.

"Sure, an' is it yourself, honey?" exclaimed the old lady, all the hardness dying out of her voice, which a few seconds before had been shrieking defiance at everybody in general, and nobody in particular. "It's thrimbling all over, that ye are, and no wonder, but it's nothing but Biddy McGuire, bad cess to her, an' a few friends settling an argyment. Come along, darlint, ye're as cowl'd as a landlord's heart, and there's a fire

in yer room and something in front of it wid an illigant smell, that 'ud tempt a saint to ate on a fast day."

The white-faced young woman hesitated.

"Oh, I can't, I can't," she said—"they might—hurt the child."

"Hurt the child, is it?" cried the old Irishwoman, taking the little one in her stalwart arms, "and do you think that there is ony man or woman here that 'ud lay a finger on it? Sure, honey, it's a mighty fine characther you're givin them, because they're havin a bit of divarshin among themselves. Whist, there!" she called out at the top of her voice. "Kape quiet a minit, can't yiz, sure it's Misthress Lea and her little one, and they can't see their way for the noise ye're makin', at all, at all."

As she spoke she went forward with the child in her arms, and, directly the little crowd saw what her burden was, it fell back and made way for her and for the young woman who followed her. It seemed as though the fair head of the child had been a flag of truce. The raised arms fell to the combatants' sides, and the angry voices were hushed.

And so, through a lane of bruised and battered faces, many of them stained with blood, Marion Lea and her child passed to the little house at the end of the court, where, for weeks past, the Widow Maloney had given them shelter.

Somehow or other, after that the fight fell a bit flat. One or two of the women seized the opportunity to go indoors and repair the damage to their features and their garments in a temporary sort of way. And the men, feeling that an interval for refreshment had arrived, went up the court and into the street and made a bee line for the public house at the corner. And, in another ten minutes, there was nothing to show that a great fight had raged in Strawberry Court but a few stray tresses of hair, and half a bonnet, and an apron torn to ribbons, lying on the ground.

And when all was quiet, and the principal combatants had scattered themselves about the street among the barrows and cabbages and Ostend rabbits and old clothes, and the other principal items of the Christmas market, a big policeman stepped into the entrance of the court and exclaimed in a solemn whisper, "Now, then, what's up down there; not so much of it," and a small boy emerging at this moment kicking the half bonnet merrily in front of him, the policeman cuffed him valorously, and de-

parted with the proud satisfaction of having done his duty and restored law and order in Strawberry Court.

In the meantime the Widow Maloney had not been idle. She had personally conducted Mrs. Lea and the child up the ricketty stairs that led to her two rooms, she had put a little more coke on the glowing fire, and she had bustled about and produced a couple of cracked tea cups from a little cupboard in the corner, and, after diligent search on a broken shelf, she had unearthed the remains of a plate, and a fork with one prong and a half, and having "laid the table" with these, she had taken a haddock from a battered old Dutch oven in front of the fire, a teapot from the hob, and had informed Mrs. Lea that "supper was ready."

Marion Lea's heart was too full to eat. She was tired and hungry, and ill, you could see that at a glance, but she felt that the food would choke her.

She drank a little tea, but shook her head at the haddock.

"Sure, I'll not listen to a word tell ye've eaten a mite of it, ony way!" exclaimed the old Irishwoman. "Its starving ye must be all these hours that you've been wandering about. Come! you and the little one, have your supper, and thin, sure, ye shall tell me all that's happened."

The old Irishwoman's voice trembled a little as she spoke. She was disappointed, and Marion Lea saw it. She knew that it would make the good old soul miserable if she refused her hospitality, and so she made a brave struggle, and helped the child, and ate a few mouthfuls herself.

"And you," said Marion, "aren't you going to sit down with us?"

"Not me, acushla," said Mrs. Maloney, "sure, I had my supper before ye come in."

The statement was only partially true. Mrs. Maloney's supper had consisted of a glass of neat gin at the "Fortune of War" up the street.

Mrs. Maloney was a widow, who went out charing in the locality. Charing in the neighbourhood of Strawberry Court is not exactly a lucrative profession. The perquisites are not great, and there are no meals in the servants' hall attached to the office. The people for whom Mrs. Maloney charred didn't keep servants, and they had no more cold meat on the premises than they could do with themselves. Her employers were small, struggling shop-keepers and artisans in the neighbourhood whose

wives wanted occasional assistance on washing days, or who, owing to domestic circumstances, were unable to do any of the housework at all.

The pay was small, but with a few shillings which she received weekly for cleaning out the offices of a local money-lender, who called himself "The Provident Loan Society," Mrs. Maloney managed to pay the rent of her two rooms, and "live."

Among the people for whom the widow worked were a Mr. Lea and his wife. They were gentlefolks who had seen better days. Robert Lea had commenced life with every prospect of happiness and prosperity before him. He had inherited, by the death of his father, a retired naval officer, a good round sum, and he had married the girl he loved. She had brought him nothing

but when she was once more able to be about, a fresh blow fell upon her husband.

He had invested the money left him by his father in foreign securities, which yielded a tempting interest. A financial crisis came, the securities fell rapidly, and, presently, Robert Lea found himself, with hundreds of other confiding investors, the creditor of a bankrupt government, and once more, instead of bravely setting his teeth and facing the blows of fortune, he went head-long to destruction.

The house was parted with, and with the



"HURT THE CHILD, IS IT?" CRIED THE IRISHWOMAN.

but her love and her beauty, but her love was enough.

The first years of their married life were happy ones. Marion was a devoted wife, and had no thought in the world beyond her husband and her child—baby Marion. But after the child was born Marion fell ill, and for a long time it was feared that she would die. Robert Lea broke down under the trouble, and took his first fatal step on the road to ruin. In the long hours when he was alone and cast down, not knowing from day to day whether his wife would live or die, he sought relief in the brandy bottle. Gradually Marion gained strength,

remnant of his worldly goods he and Marion and her child moved into a little house in a cheap neighbourhood, and here it was that the Widow Maloney began to work for them because they were too poor to keep a servant.

Robert Lea obtained employment, but his character had been destroyed by drink. He became reckless, and at last, to save Marion and her child from being turned into the street, he embezzled the money of his employer, and went from bad to worse. At last the day came when the heart-broken wife waited for her husband's return, only to learn that he had been arrested, and was in prison.

She did all that a woman could do.

She parted with everything she had to raise the money for his defence, and she sought to soften the heart of his employers. Her efforts were in vain. Robert Lea was sentenced to twelve months' imprisonment, and she and her child were left penniless.

It was when the last stick had been seized, and she had sought in vain for employment, and was absolutely penniless and homeless, that the old Irishwoman offered her the shelter of her humble roof "just till she could turn round a bit."

For the sake of her child, Marion Lea accepted the offer, hoping against hope that she would be able to earn money, and repay her benefactress.

With her needle she did occasionally manage to earn a little, but it barely sufficed to keep her child and herself decently clad.

When she had a few shillings to spare she insisted on the old Irishwoman accepting them towards her share of the rent, but she was never in a position to live by her own exertions.

She would have risked all and taken her own rooms, but the dread of failing with the weekly rent and her little one being perhaps taken from her, caused her courage to break down at the last minute, and so she stayed on in that terrible court, waiting for the day when her husband would be a free man, and they would start life again afresh, forgetting the past, and struggling bravely to redeem it.

Her affection for her husband never wavered through all the weary months of trial. She believed in him still—believed that he had been driven to his deed by the madness which comes of misery and misfortune.

Down Strawberry Court there was only one opinion concerning the Widow Maloney's lodger. She was to these wild, rough people, reared in squalor and darkness, what the fair garden flower is to the children of the slums. Her beautiful face,

her soft voice, her gentle ways, appealed at once to their better natures, and the story of her sorrows and her wrongs went straight to their hearts. When "the lady" passed by, the oaths of the rough men ceased, and though she was poorer than they were, the coarsest of the women would give her a smile, and address her as "mam," and felt honoured when she stopped and spoke to them. They knew that her husband was in prison, but that made no difference in their respect for her. Their own husbands went to prison occasionally, and some of them had, themselves, been there for slight infractions of the law. They didn't think very much of it. Prison is one of those accidents which are liable to happen in the

best regulated families in Strawberry Court.

It didn't matter much to them when the "old man" got put away for a month over a drunken fight or a little difference of opinion with the law, but they knew that it mattered a great deal to "a real lady," like Mrs. Lea, and they were genuinely sorry for her.

When she was ill once and couldn't get about, and old Mrs. Maloney had to go to her work, because

rent does not stop for people being ill, several of the women in the court volunteered to take their turn at the patient's bedside, and kind, gentle nurses these rough women proved themselves to be.

She didn't mend so fast as she should have done, and they had a little informal committee meeting among themselves with Mrs. Maloney in the chair (the chair was a doorstep at the top of the court), and they decided that a doctor ought to be called in, and they determined to have a real good one and subscribed among themselves to pay him. And, in order that Mrs. Lea shouldn't feel worried, they invented a pious fiction,



SHE SHOWED MRS. MALONEY WHAT WAS LEFT OF THE SWAG.

and the medical gentleman was introduced to Marion by Mrs. Maloney as "my club doctor, honey, and ye'll not be after botherin' yerself about the expinse, for it's a shilling a visit by the law o' the land, more power to it."

Marion got better again, for she was buoyed up by one great hope—the hope of seeing her husband again.

And so the twelve months went by, and the time came when Robert Lea would come out into the world again.

On the day that he was to be released Marion went to the prison gates; but she came too late. Robert Lea had been dismissed at an earlier hour than usual, and had gone no one knew whither. He knew his wife's address; he knew that she was with the old Irishwoman who had been her friend, but day after day passed and no Robert Lea came down Strawberry Court, and no line came from him to cheer the heart of his patient, long suffering wife.

The Widow Maloney was highly indignant, but she knew better than to worry poor Marion's heart with harsh words concerning her husband. The ladies of Strawberry Court were as indignant as the widow. They one and all agreed that Mrs. Lea was a blessed sight too good for such a wretch, and if they could have found Mr. Lea in any nice, quiet place, when his attention would not have been distracted by other matters, he would have heard some very unpleasant things, and have had a very bad time of it.

Robert Lea was discharged on the 20th of December, and every day his wife went out and tried in vain to get some trace of him.

At last she took to wandering aimlessly about the streets, with a vague hope of seeing him in the crowd. But night after night she came back weary and despairing, and, little by little, all hope died out of her heart.

And so it came to Christmas Eve, and Marion came back from a long day of unavailing search to

Strawberry Court, and arrived in the thick of the faction fight. She had been to every place where she thought there was the slightest chance of obtaining a clue, but from the hour that Robert Lea had passed out of the prison gates she could hear nothing of him.

After the pretence of supper was over, and the kind, old Irishwoman had cleared away the cracked tea-cup and the damaged plate, she thought it would be a relief to Marion's feelings to let her talk, and so she asked her where she had been and what she had done, and, after listening to the poor wife's story, tried, in her quaint, Irish way, to comfort the sorrowing woman by making the wildest suggestions as to what might have happened to cause Robert Lea's disappearance.

She suggested that he might have heard suddenly of a good place in the north, and gone off to secure it; that he might have met a friend who had lent him money, and that he had at once busied himself in getting a fine place ready for his wife and child, as a surprise to them; that he had gone to sea, to find some of his father's fellow officers who were cruising about in a man o' war, hoping they would do something for him, so that he might come back with gold in his pocket, and a smile on his face, and tell his sweetheart that their troubles were over.

But the widow's romantic theories had no effect upon Marion. She had given



"DO YOU WANT TO KILL HIM" SHE EXCLAIMED, MAKING A DASH AT THE WIDOW

herself up to utter despair. She had pictured a Christmas Day on which she and her husband could be together once more, and Christmas Eve had come and he was farther away from her than he had been when only the prison gates were between them.

Finding all her efforts to arouse her lodger useless, Mrs. Maloney suddenly recollected that she had her Christmas marketing, such as it was, still to do, and so, taking her battered old basket on her arm, she threw a shawl over one shoulder and went out, hoping when she returned to find Mrs. Lea in a little better spirits.

When she got to the top of the court, she found a little group of her neighbours in animated conversation. Rube Tully had been seriously injured in the recent fight. He had had a nasty cut across the head, and his missus had just come out and said that she couldn't make him out, he was beginning to talk so queer, she thought he wasn't quite right. And then! one dropped a word and another dropped a word, of course in the strictest confidence, and it appeared that, always under the vow of secrecy, Rube's wife

had informed them she didn't care about Rube being taken to the hospital, for he was "giving himself away dreadful over a little job he'd been mixed up in lately."

While the ladies were discussing Mrs. Rube's painful domestic difficulty, out came Mrs. Rube herself for further consultation. Catching sight of the widow she begged her to come in and see Rube, as perhaps she'd be able to tell her what she ought to do.

The widow assented at once. There was no doubt that Rube was seriously hurt. The widow saw that directly Mrs. Rube lifted the wet rag which she had put over the ugly gash. And there was no doubt he wasn't quite right in his head, for he was going on about a man he had knocked down and robbed, and he would rise up

every now and then on his elbow, and hoarsely order his wife to be careful about the stowing away of the "swag," and not to let the neighbours know anything about it.

When he lay back again on the bed in the corner and closed his eyes, Mrs. Rube told Mrs. Maloney, in a stage whisper, that a few days before, Rube had come home late one night with a few pieces of gold and a couple of bank notes, and had told her that he'd met a swell, who was wandering about the Mint, trying to find Strawberry Court, and that he had offered to conduct him, and had led him past a bit of cleared land, where they were going to put up industrial

dwellings, and had picked up a brick and knocked the stranger on the head with it, and stripped his pockets, leaving him to come to himself at his own convenience.

Then Mrs. Rube stole on tip-toe to a corner of the room, and, lifting a board, put her hand down and drew up a dirty little brown paper parcel and opened it, and showed Mrs. Maloney what was left of the "swag." There were two five pound notes and some papers, a couple of letters, and an old envelope. The envelope had been used to carry the five

pound notes in, and Rube had left them there to keep them clean.

"You see if I sends him to the 'orsepital and he talks," said Mrs. Rube, "he'd be took, cus the police are sure to be sent for, and they'll have found that swell, you may be sure, and they'll guess as Rube's the man they want for the job. What 'ud you do if you was me?"

Now the Widow Maloney was like a good many honest folks in the slums. She wouldn't have done anything criminal herself, but she wasn't stiff or stuck up with her criminal neighbours, nor over censorious with regard to their morals. So she agreed with Mrs. Rube that it would not be well to let Rube go to the hospital. She thought the best way would be to get the local doctor to come and see him, and strap his



THE WIDOW MALONEY.

head up. The local doctor was slightly deaf—he must have been, and also slightly blind—for he heard nothing and saw nothing and that was the reason he kept his practice.

"Oh, one minute before you go!" said Mrs. Rube, "there's writing on the envelope as Rube brought home, and I'd like to know what's on it. It may be an address. Can you get the lady at your place to tell you what it is?"

Mrs. Maloney said she would, and took the envelope across to Marion Lea. She didn't explain its history, only that she wanted to know what was on it.

Mrs. Lea took the envelope, glanced at it, and then sprang up with a wild cry.

"Where did you get this?" she cried. "It's my writing—it is an envelope addressed by me to my husband, while he was in prison."

Old Widow Maloney's weather beaten face turned ashy white with horror. It must have been Marion's husband who had been brutally assaulted, and robbed by Rube Tully, while in search of her.

Without a word, she turned, and went downstairs, and ran, panting and gasping for breath, into Mrs. Rube's room and flung the envelope down.

"And is it myself that's goin' for a dhochter for the murtherin' vagabond?" she cried. "Sure it's a policeman I ought to be afther fetching; sure, it's the misthress's own husband, wirrasthroo! that ye may have murdered for life, ye blackguard. Where did ye lave him, ye rascal? where did ye lave him lying that night? answer me, or, by my soul, it'll be the worse for ye."

The injured man stared for a moment, aghast, at the widow, and Mrs. Rube thought she must have suddenly taken leave of her senses.

"Leave him alone," she exclaimed, making a dash at the widow, "do you want to kill him?"

"Let him answer me, then. Where did he lave the gentleman?"

"I can tell you that," exclaimed Mrs. Rube, forcing the widow away from the bedside. "It was at the top of Harrow Street!"

That was enough for Mrs. Maloney; without stopping to reply, she hitched her shawl up over her shoulders, flattened her bonnet well on the back of her head with a bang, and having thus made herself "look respectable," she ran as hard as she could to the police station and demanded to see

the inspector and at last succeeded, after exhausting all the terms of endearment in the Irish language on the youthful policeman on duty at the door, in obtaining admission and getting an interview with the officer in charge.

To this officer she told her story, and he was able at once to inform her that a well-dressed man had been found on the night of the 20th suffering from a severe wound on the head, and taken to Guy's Hospital in an insensible condition, and he was there now.

Away to the hospital went Mrs. Maloney, and again all the powers of Irish eloquence had to be called into play to obtain an interview with the doctor, the widow's wild appearance and sundry awkward-looking scratches on her face, the result of the evening's battle, favouring the porter's assumption that she had been drinking.

But the tale she told the doctor, although it was difficult to follow all at once, fitted in with the fact that a man had been brought in on the 20th suffering from a scalp wound, and that he was there still.

The man had been able to converse that day for the first time, but his mind was still confused, and the doctors had not pressed him with many questions.

He was, however, going on all right; the doctor could tell Mrs. Maloney that, and there was no doubt about his ultimate recovery.

The Widow Maloney, directly she heard that Robert Lea was out of danger, leapt in the air; and, uttering the wild war cry of her ancestors, suddenly disappeared from the gaze of the astonished house surgeon.

With her bonnet on the back of her head, and one end of her shawl flying in the breeze, she made her way back to Straw-



THE TIRED LITTLE WOMAN FELL ON HER KNEES BY THE BEDSIDE.

berry Court, and bursting into the room where Marion was sitting in a dull stupor, wondering what that envelope and Mrs. Maloney's mysterious conduct could mean, she cried—

"I've found him, acushla, I've found him, mavourneen! Don't be afther asking me no questions to-night, but slape with a light heart, acushla, and to-morrow I'll take ye to him myself, so I will."

* * * * *

The officials made no difficulty in allowing Marion Lea to see her husband. The night had brought a great change. The sufferer was much better, his mind was clear, and he remembered everything, and when they brought his wife to his bedside he held out his arms, and the poor, tired little woman gave a great sob, and fell on her knees by the bedside, and laid her head upon his breast; the nurses didn't interfere, but turned aside, and began to study the Christmas greetings on the walls of the ward, with tear-dimmed eyes.

They let her stay as long as they could, and husband and wife heard the Christmas bells chime as they sat hand in hand. And before Marion went back, with a heart full of joy and hope to Strawberry Court, Robert had told her a piece of wonderful news.

On the night before he left prison he received a letter from his father's old solicitors asking him to call on them at once. He went, and learnt that by the death of his father's elder brother, who many years previously had gone out to the Cape, and had never communicated with his relatives afterwards, he had inherited an immense fortune.

The solicitors gave him what ready-money he wanted, and he set out, with a

heart full of joy, to find his wife and child and tell her the good news. It was while he was lost in the mazes of the Mint that Rube Tully struck him down, robbed him, and left him insensible upon the ground.

* * * * *

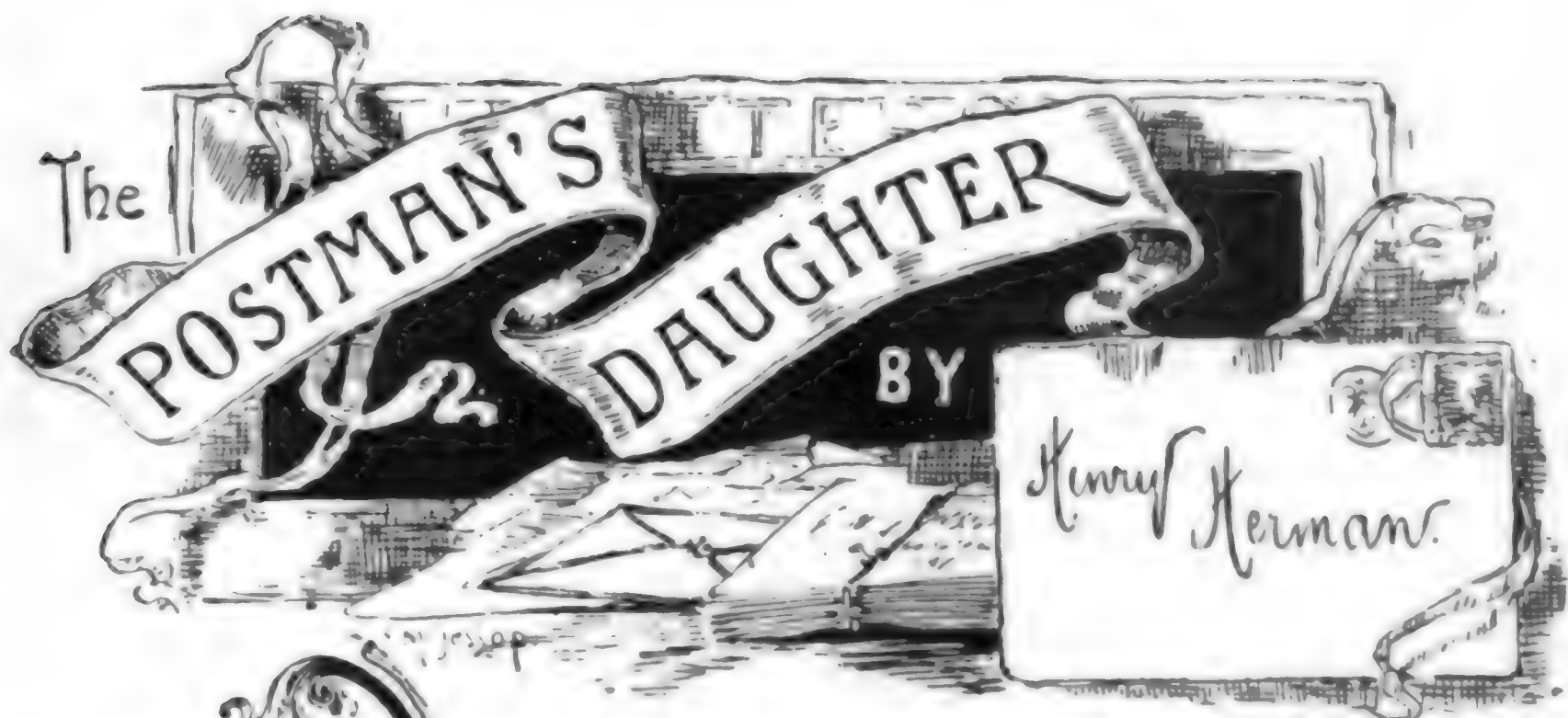
The lesson of his first great misfortune had not been thrown away. Robert Lea has used the vast wealth wisely, and one of his first acts was to show his gratitude to the kindly-hearted men and women of Strawberry Court. On the site of the old rookery there now stands a great block of model dwellings known as "Lea's Buildings," and the Strawberry Courtiers had the first choice when the flats were ready, and to them the rent has been fixed at a very moderate sum indeed.

And the Widow Maloney, the kindest friend of all, has had the wish of her heart gratified. She received a good round sum, and had her passage paid to America, and went to live near her eldest son who, with the assistance of his mother's capital, is doing remarkably well with a "Store" in the West.

Strawberry Court is no longer to be found in the Mint. There were many evil stories told of it in the days when it was a modern Alsatia. The story that I have told should at least be remembered to its credit. It is by no means an uncommon story. Among the lowest and roughest denizens of our great London rookeries, gentleness, love, devotion, generosity, and self-sacrifice, are still to be found by those who dive beneath the surface of things.

"The poor help the poor," and the ready sympathy which the poor extend to their brothers and sisters in misfortune is one of the brightest features in the story of the slums.





O man was better known in Westwood than Ben Chorley, the senior postman, and no man was better liked. He was a hardy, wiry little man, who bore his fifty odd years with a cheery vigour. There was a continual smile on his face, and the grey eyes twinkled with a hearty welcome for man, woman, or child—even the dogs came in for a full share. The four golden good-conduct stripes on his breast had been well earned in the service of Her Majesty's postal authorities, and Ben Chorley had long ago come to be looked upon as one of the village institutions which could have been as ill spared as, say, the great tap-room at the brewery or the village pump.

Westwood was a long, straggling village some seven or eight miles from London on the north-western side. Its postal confines ran from the box in the wall of Mr. Ashington's tannery, a full two miles as the crow flies, to the postman's own cottage, and thence again, another mile and a half at least, to the post-office near the railway station. It was a pretty village, partly hidden in a valley shaded by mighty elms

and beeches, intermingled here and there with hollies and firs. After hiding itself amid the sheltering foliage for a mile or so, it straggled out into the open across the spur of a hill and there meandered, a house every hundred and fifty or two hundred yards at the most, until it became quite a cluster of cottages and factories at its northern end, where the great tannery dominated the whole. Ben Chorley, it can be readily imagined therefore, had to use his legs, and nimbly too, as year in, year out, he went on his daily rounds. But the old man persisted in saying that walking did him good, and he sneeringly refused the offer of a tricycle made to him by a sympathising friend.

"What's the good of having legs if one's not to use them," he said. "I'll ask you to lend me that thingumyjig of yours when I get old."

Times had not always been so hard with Ben Chorley. The old people in the village could well remember the time when Ben owned that snug and spacious house ensconced in its six acres of garden and park land, that stood about a mile from the village, on the road to London. He had been well-to-do in those days, and had boasted a comfortable income. But one day people heard of a great bank smash, and Ben Chorley fell with many other unhappy men who saw their families dragged to poverty and want through the criminal folly and recklessness of a few bank directors. He took it to heart for a day or so merely, and then that happy smile of his returned, and he said to his

wife—she was alive then—"I must set to work to earn our living, Bessie." And he did; for the very next day he applied for the office of village postman, that had just become vacant, and he got it and kept it, and never complained and never fretted.

The dear old wife was gone and laid to her rest, but there was one bright face that always welcomed the old postman when he returned from his rounds—his daughter, Ida. She was eighteen just then, as bright and winsome a lass as that country-side knew, with her round face, budding lips, and deep blue eyes—she had these from her mother—and soft, silken brown hair, such as a duchess might well have envied. Beyond that her features were none too regular. But it was a pleasant face; a face that impressed the end-of-century cynic with the idea that there might be, after all, some good in women in this world, and left the more softly-tempered philosopher with the cheering assurance that his view of the world was not wrong. She was a hard worker, too, and nimble with her fingers. There was Ben Chorley's sister in the house, to be sure; but, like her brother, she was getting on towards the sixties, and, although hard as a nail and ready to work like a horse, she was so grumpy and nagging that Ben would gladly have done without her, had he not felt sure that nobody would have kept his sister for more than a day had she left the old cottage.

It was not much of a place to live in, that cottage, though it was downright pretty, when the traveller's joy and clematis spread themselves in a veil of green and colour over the whitewashed brick and rubble of the walls. The thatch was two feet thick with its layer upon layer of a hundred years or more, and over the porch ran a network of gloire de Dijon roses, which were the postman's special pride. The little garden in front of the diamond-paned parlour window was aglow with French marigolds and sunflowers, and even the old and rotten palisade fencing was so intermixed with the summer greenery, as to be nearly indistinguishable from it. Two huge elms, and a couple of Normandy poplars shaded the house on one side, and at the back there ran from it some thirty yards of a kitchen garden in which Chorley passed every moment that he could spare, and where many a tough problem anent the raising of beet root and the like, was satisfactorily solved by him. The cultivation of silver-tailed beet root was, at that time, Chorley's particular hobby,

and the young seedlings were protected by wires, and other easily procured means against attacks from marauding cats and birds.

It was but little after eight o'clock one bright and breezy summer morning, and the village postman had been gone, and away already for the past two hours. Ida Chorley was seated in the little parlour, cutting up freshly gathered beans for that day's dinner, and Mrs. Scawby, the old postman's sister, was engaged in burnishing the old fashioned brass dogs of the fire place. The old lady's unceasing care was bestowed upon the cleansing and furbishing of the household goods. To her mind there was no such thing as cleanliness among people that lived in these school-board education ridden days. Girls were getting so many high falutin notions drummed into their heads, the old lady used to say, that they didn't think of sparing time to keep their homes clean and tidy. If there was as much as a speck of dust upon a piece of furniture, if there was as much as a dull dot on the brightly shining surface of a metal utensil, if the tiled floor of the kitchen was not as polished and slippery as the proverbial nigger's face in July, the old lady would set to work with vigorous wash-leather and household flannel, and would not leave the task until the eye-sore had been removed. Year in, year out, morning, evening, noon and night, she was scrubbing, cleaning and washing, and had she, on a sudden, been left a fortune of some thousands a year, her first use of the wind-fall would have been to lay in a store of unlimited house flannel, polish powder, bath brick, and wash leather.

Ida had been for the past nine months engaged to be married to Walter Theydon, the confidential clerk and cashier of old Mr. Ashington, the owner of the big tannery at the other end of the village. Mr. Ashington was an invalid, whom acute rheumatism kept nearly permanently confined to his couch. The young man had entered his service as a lad, and had risen by his steady application to business, and the force of sturdy honesty and intelligent industry, until at last the wealthy, sick man left him the entire management of his great factory, and the keeping of his accounts and cash, contenting himself by calling in a London accountant, at the end of every quarter, to check and verify the books and examine the money and stock. Mr. Ashington was a widower who had neither child, nor kith, nor kin. It was surmised

by nearly everybody in the village—indeed the tanner had favoured the dissemination of that surmise—that Walter Theydon would, some day or other, be admitted into partnership, and in the end, perhaps, be made the old man's heir.

Walter Theydon was a handsome lad of twenty-three, straight as an arrow, broad-shouldered and broad-chested, healthy in body and mind. That he loved Ida Chorley goes without saying, and that she loved him as much as he loved her, is as easily imaginable. The two young people were so eminently fitted to make one another happy through life that old Ben Chorley felt that the only load of his waning days had slipped from his shoulders when he knew that his girl was engaged to a bright, thriving lad who was worthy of her.

There is a skeleton in nearly every cupboard, and Walter Theydon had a scapegrace brother, Ralph, a lad two years younger than himself, who had already, in his early years, fallen into the hands of very bad companions. He had originally been a clerk in a city warehouse, but had been sent away for some trifling misconduct, and for the past three years now he had been known to be a constant and boon associate of gamblers, racing sharpers, and, it was feared, perhaps worse. He seldom came near his brother, however, and when

he did it was only to borrow a few pounds, which he never repaid; and the open-handed Walter nearly always gave way to the pitiful pleading of his younger and, to his mind, unfortunate brother.

Ralph was Miss Scawby's pet aversion. He had been seen in the village on the previous day, and that fact alone had aroused the old lady's ire.

"A good for nothing scallawag," Mrs. Scawby was saying, "as ought to be in gaol, and most likely will be afore long, bringing shame on his poor, dear brother. I only hope when they catch him they won't let him out again."

"Don't say such spiteful things, auntie," Ida said, looking up from her work.

"We know of nothing really bad that he has done, so far, nothing really bad."

The old lady went on rubbing away at the brass dog with all her might, as if every vicious squeeze were intended for



the offending Ralph.

"He has done everything that is bad enough to have got a man hanged in my young days. What do you want him to do more? There is that poor Walter a-slaving and a-toiling to earn a few pounds to get a home for you and him, and he ain't no sooner got them than that scamp comes by and takes half of it away from him. And where's the good of it? I say, where's the good of it? It ain't no more use than pour-

ing water through a sieve. The more he'll get, the more he'll want, and the oftener he gets it, the oftener he'll come again!"

"But he is Walter's brother," Ida interposed. "He can't let him go to the dogs!"

"*He* go to the dogs!" the old lady sneered. "I tell you, Ida, the dogs wouldn't have him if he came to them. There is not a decent dog in Westwood as would be seen walking with him, and the sooner your Walter shows him on which side the carpenter has built the door, the better it will be for you and for him."

A savage rub on the bright knob of the fire dog emphasized this speech.

A hoarsely whispered "Good day, Ida," reached the girl's ear, and, looking up, she saw, at the open parlour door, her sweetheart, who smiled at her—such a sickly smile. His face was pale.

"Good morning, darling," he whispered again, evidently making an effort to speak more loudly, and failing. Then he waved his hand and was about to walk towards the garden gate, when Ida flew towards him.

"What is the matter, Walter?" the girl cried. "Won't you come in? Surely you won't go by like this."

The young man looked towards Mrs. Scawby, who had risen to a half-kneeling posture, and then turned towards the gate with a sigh.

"I am not very well, my dear," he said, "and I am in a great hurry. I have to go to London on important business." He gripped the girl's hand, and she felt his fingers, cold and clammy, within her own.

"I am troubled, Ida," he said. "You mustn't mind me this morning. It will be all right in a day or two, no doubt." And he smiled again; and the smile was even more meaningless than before.

"Something very awful has happened, I know," said Ida, pleadingly. "Do let me know. Perhaps I may be able to do something to help you."

"You can do nothing to help me, my dear, nothing," he rejoined. "But I must be away."

They were outside the little garden then, and just in the shelter of the great cluster of sunflowers, which was the special ornament of the palisaded corner.

"Don't go away like that, Walter," the girl interposed. "Tell me what troubles you. Do tell me. Think! I am to be your wife. I ought to know what oppresses you and try to bear my share."

He looked about him and towards the open door of the parlour, as if afraid lest somebody might overhear him.

"I don't mind telling you," he said, "but it is too awful, too terrible, and I am nearly mad with it. Ralph came to me last night."

"Ralph!" exclaimed the girl. "I feared as much. What has he done?"

"He came to me," continued the lad, "and he seemed so repentant, and so intent upon starting on a new road, that I lent him five pounds, and I was fool enough, in lending him the money, to show him that there were other notes in the safe. He stayed with me throughout the evening, and I talked to him, and he agreed with me in everything, and, as it was getting late, I allowed him to sleep with me. This morning he got up as if nothing had happened, and he had his breakfast and went away. Everything went on all right until I went down into the office, and opened my safe. The notes were gone—one hundred pounds. He had got up during the night, and taken the key out of my pocket, and stolen the notes."

A cry of anguish escaped the girl's lips.

"And what will you do?" she asked piteously.

"It wouldn't matter so much," he replied, "if it were not that this very morning Mr. Ashington has written to Mr. Bembridge, the accountant in Kilburn, to come and check the books and the cash. He will be at the tannery this afternoon, and I shan't be able to explain what has become of the money. If I only had four-and-twenty hours' grace I could raise the money and replace it. As it is, I don't know what to do."

"But why don't you tell Mr. Ashington that your brother stole the money?"

"I can't," he answered, "I can't. I can't send my own brother to penal servitude."

"But surely you won't destroy your own character, your own reputation for honesty, to save that young scoundrel," Ida exclaimed.

"I won't be the one to open the prison doors for him. I must try and see it through. I must, I must! I am off to London now."

A thought flashed across his mind at that instant. Mr. Ashington's letter had been posted in the pillar box in the wall of the tannery that very morning. Ida's father was the postman who would collect it. For one brief second—for one heart

beat only, the troubled young man thought of asking Ida to get her father to let him have that letter. Then he remembered all such a demand would imply. He remembered the stern honesty, and the unrelenting devotion to duty of the old public servant—his years of honourable service—and the thought vanished as something to be ashamed of. He breathed a great sigh, and looking his sweetheart straight in the face, he shook her hand, and raised the dainty fingers to his lips and kissed them, and sped away.

She looked after him with her heart over full to breaking. Her Walter, her idol, her lover, so honest, so truthful, so brave, so honourable, was threatened with disgrace through no fault of his own, and she was helpless, forced to stand by and see him rush towards his ruin out of his very generosity and goodness of heart. Could she do nothing? Nothing at all?

She retraced her steps slowly, with eyes to the ground, and returned to the parlour. Her face had gone so white and her manner was so listless, that Mrs. Scawby, who by that time had reached the kitchen, and was as busy cleaning there as she had previously been in the parlour, turned towards her and said: "Why, what is the matter with you, my child? Have you had a quarrel with Walter?"

"Oh no, auntie," Ida replied, "not in the least."

"I know better," the old woman went on. "He said something unkind to you or has gone off in a huff. I will give him the length of my tongue when I see him next."

"He has said nothing unkind, auntie," the girl retorted, hardly knowing what she said. "He is the best, the dearest man in the world."

"There ain't no understanding girls' foibles nowadays," the old lady grumbled.

"When I was a girl and I had to say something, I said it," and she rubbed the copper candlestick viciously and with a surprising swiftness.

Ida returned to the little front garden and sat herself down on the bench outside the parlour window. What could she do? What could she do to help Walter? was the thought uppermost in her mind. Just then she could see her father's wiry figure coming along the high road, with his post-bag slung across his shoulder, walking as lithely as if he



THE POSTMAN CAME IN TO GET A GLASS OF ALE.

had been fifteen, and not in the later fifties. Her father, she thought — perhaps he might be able to do something to help her. She might confide in him, she knew. What could he do?

Just then the same thought that had sprung upon Walter crossed the tablet of her mind. Walter had said that if he had four and twenty hours' grace, all would be well. That letter which Mr. Ashington had written had been posted in the early morning and her father would have it in

that bag. She would ask her father to lend her that letter for a day. There was no harm in that. The very next day she herself would re-post that letter and nobody would be the loser, and her Walter would be safe. Yes, she would ask her father. She would tell him all, and he would consent, of course, and gladly, too.

The old man was coming nearer, and she could see his cheery face smiling towards her from the distance, and he was waving

his hand to her. With the closer approach of the old man, came to her the more truthful appreciation of his character. Sternly honest, unyieldingly straightforward, with but one beacon-light guiding his path—his duty. It would be a grave misconduct on his part to let his child have that letter for a day even. He would never consent to it. He would rebuke her, and all would be lost. No, she dared not. Some

other means would have to be found. Something would have to be devised to get that letter without her father's knowledge.

The old man, in passing the cottage, generally went into the pantry to get a glass of ale and a bit of bread and cheese. The postmaster of the district knew that he always did so, and consented to the arrangement, whereby the old man snatched about three or four minutes' respite from

his tiring work. During these three or four minutes the letter would have to be taken. It would be desperate work, but it would have to be done.

Ben Chorley, as he reached his cottage door, noticed what his sister had previously seen—that his child was pale and troubled.

"What is the matter with you, my wench?" he asked. "Have you seen a bogie?"

"Nothing is the matter with me, dad,"

the girl replied. "Only I don't feel quite well. It is the heat, perhaps, or something of the kind. I shall be all right when dinner time comes round."

"Trust you for that," the old man answered, with a laugh. "Dinner is a mighty medicine, ain't it, my dear? I know lots of people that look pale and sick, that could be cured by a good dinner every day."

The post-bag was in his hand, and he threw it into the

corner of the fire-place, as was his wont. It had always been safe—so safe, so hallowed against all touch—these years past. Nobody had ever thought of touching it with as much as a little finger. He went out into the kitchen, and then into the pantry just beyond the kitchen, and Ida's eyes were glued upon that brown bag. There was a chair near the fire-place, and she crept towards it, with her eyes staring



ONE HAGGARD LOOK, AND SHE SAW THAT ALL WAS SAFE.

as if they were bursting from their sockets. The bag lay with its opening next to the ground, and she stooped and reached out one arm and turned it.

The material rustled under her touch, and she started back like a thief surprised at his guilty work. Her eyes wandered towards the kitchen door. There, on the other side of the wall, Mrs. Scawby was busy, and one glance from the old lady would ruin all her darling Walter's chances. The girl's heart beat in a wild riot of fear, and once more she reached out her hand and, taking the bag, dragged it slowly towards her. She could hear her father ask her aunt a question and her aunt's reply. Icy fingers seemed to clutch her throat, and to tighten around her neck, and choke her.

The bag was upon her knees, and she dived into it. Such a mass of letters! They crackled and grated against one another, and the noise her fingers made between them frightened her nearly out of her wits. One letter in her hand! She looked at it. It was not the one she wanted. Another! but not that one, either. At least a dozen more. Nothing like it.

At last — by what chance by blessed heaven sent she knew not—there was the accountant's name "Mr. Bembridge." She saw that and no more. Her heart seemed to stop its beating as she dropped the bag into its place, next to the fire place near the wall, and slipped the letter into her pocket.

One haggard look towards the open kitchen door, and she saw that all was safe. Then her face brightened, and the tears welled from her eyes. Happy, grateful tears. She had that dreadful letter in her pocket. Her father knew nothing about it, and her Walter was safe.

The old man returned from the pantry, with a glass in his hand and a morsel of bread and cheese in his fingers.

"I was that hungry, my girl," he said merrily, "I could have eaten a whole sheep."

She looked at him, with awe-stricken eyes. She had deceived him, that confiding, honest, true and kind father of hers. For

the first time in her life she was ashamed to look into his face. She had done wrong—but then surely a merciful providence had watched over her, and smiled approvingly. There was forgiveness, she thought, for such sins as hers. It was all for her Walter's sake—and her Walter was safe.

"Still not well?" the old man exclaimed cheerily, sipping the last drop of ale, and setting down the glass with a little bang. "Well, you'll be brighter when you have had your dinner, won't you, lass?"

He patted her pale cheek, and took up his bag and went out.

A minute or two passed when he was gone before Ida dared to look up. The room seemed to be dark to her. Was her sight failing, or was it her happiness that played tricks with her senses? She felt the letter in her pocket. It was there all right—that precious safeguard which was her Walter's assurance against danger. She felt it again and again, and was so happy—so happy.

With a timid movement she took the letter from her pocket and looked at it. The gloom baffled her. The she stole into the corner of the room by the window and, tremblingly, held it to the light to assure herself that her happiness was real—that her Walter was really safe.

How her hand trembled! The letter was addressed to Mr. C. S. Bembridge, Accountant, High Road, Kilburn. That was all right. But the handwriting was not that of Mr. Ashington, which she knew. It was totally unknown to her, and as she turned the envelope she saw—and her eyes became dim at the sight—that it bore the stamp of the Falcon Hotel, an inn about a mile or so up the high road of the village.

She again mechanically turned the letter. It was marked "Private and urgent."

That was not Mr. Ashington's letter.

She had deceived her father and, perhaps, dishonoured him, and her lover was as far from safety as ever.

She slowly put the letter back into her pocket, and a hot tear stole down her cheek.

(To be concluded.)





LITTLE BIRDS LESSON

There sat a little bird on a hawthorn tree,
And there came a little bird to woo her,
And he cheeped & trilled, for with Love he was filled,
And he sang his little heart out to her:

Terereu! Terereu! Terereu! Terereu!
Why will you make me tarry?
O sweetheart true, I love but you,
Then tell me will you marry?

"Let us wait a little while," with a smile said she,
And shook each dainty little feather,
"I've never seen the world, & besides, you see,
We mightn't get on well together!"

"Tralala! Tralala! Trala" sang she,
"Why aren't you content to tarry?
"When we are old, so I've been told,
"Is time enough to marry!"

"O the world is a cruel & a naughty place,"
Said he in a tone of sorrow —
"I shall judge for myself" she cheeped in his face,
For I'm off to the world tomorrow!"

"Tralala! Tralala! Trala" sang she,
And her heart was gay with pleasure,
"Your life you waste, if you wed in haste,
"And you have to repent at leisure!"



Venice in London.

THE WINDOWS STAINED.

By E. Gowing Scopes.

SICK men have strange fancies ! I do not refer to the suicidal inclination that momentarily possesses the victims of gout and gumboil, but to the thoughts of those who are wearily living through the long depressing hours of convalescence. Men whose minds are fairly actively inclined, but who have not recovered sufficient bodily strength to lift the right foot over the left without scratching the heel of the former on the big-toe nail of the latter.

Most of us can recall some such period. The doctor has been and expressed himself satisfied. He has told the wife to persevere with the beef-tea and the medicine — especially the medicine. He sells the medicine.

Now the bedroom is wrapt in quietude, and only a shaded candle is burning. With half-closed eyes you see long streaks of light from the candle. Almost entirely close your eyes, and one of the streaks will touch the tip of your nose. A moth is circling round the light, and you worry lest it

should be lured to its doom. Poor little airy thing, in a moment it will be — No, it won't ! That moth buzzes round and round for ten minutes, and is no nearer the final swoop. Would it were doubly roasted ! There is a sound from outside as though a baby were crying. Has a passer-by left an infant, wrapped in a large coloured handkerchief, hanging on your knocker ? With five of your own, this thought does not arouse a fatherly sensation. You recognize the noise now as the warbling of the family tabby. It is spending the evening with a friend on the portico of the front door. The pair are probably rehearsing the balcony scene from *Romeo and Juliet*.

While helplessly pondering over these things, your eyes are fixed towards the window. The light from the gas lamp outside comes in between the laths of the Venetian blind. Venetian—Venice ! How marvellously quick is thought. Those innocent blinds have wafted the fancy back twenty years, and into a city whose streets are of blue waters—the “Queen of the Adriatic !”

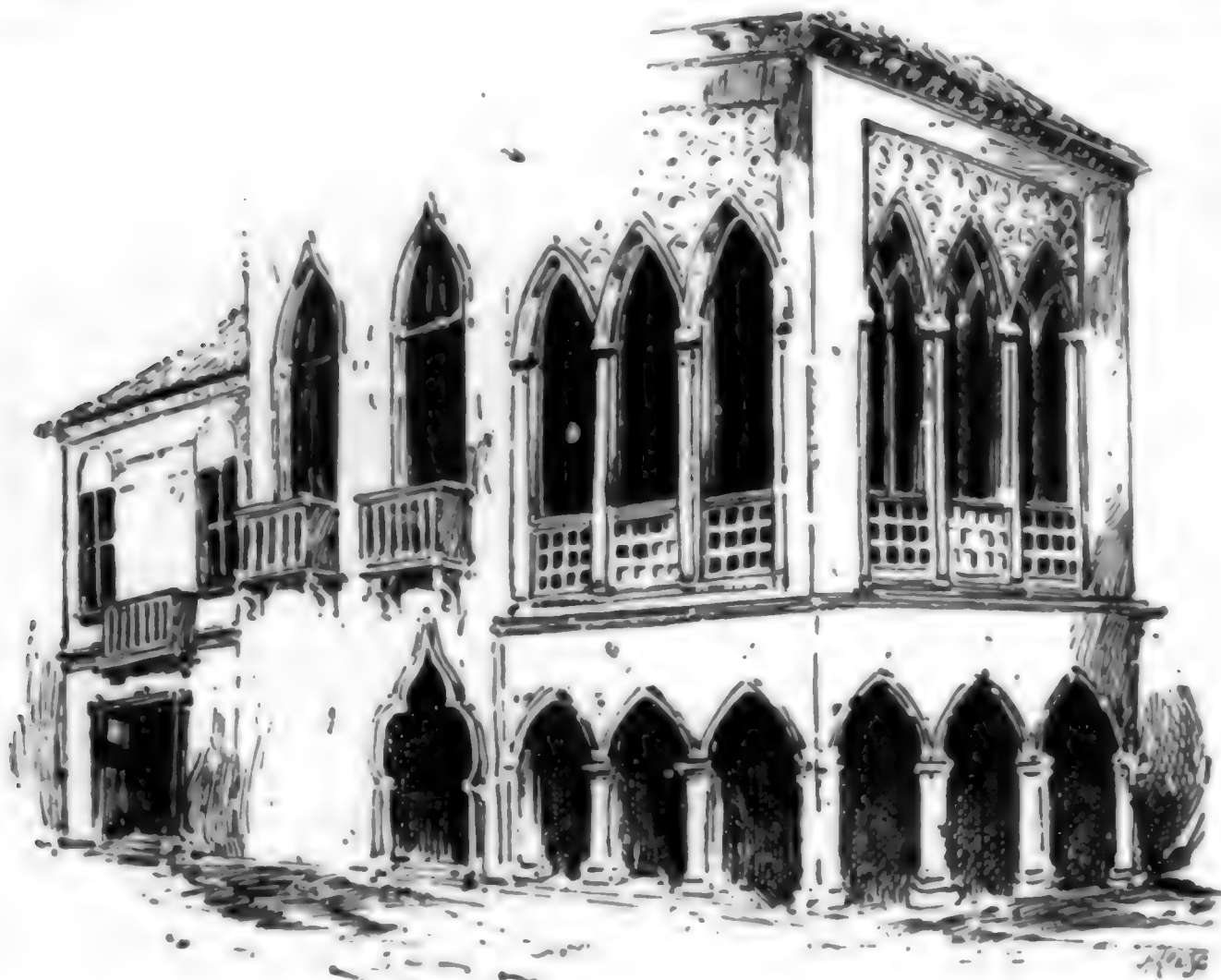
Your eyes are still fixed as before, but there is a queer light in them, and a strange smile is playing around your face. You have not looked so innocent and happy for many a year. Sunny pictures float around, and a boy's fresh love fills the heart. In sweet imagination you hover moth-like about the phantom light of the dead past. There is a step on the stair, a slight rattle of the door handle, and the good wife enters with a cup of beef-tea. A moment, and the years are back on your face, followed by a restless toss, as of a weak, sick man of the world, recovering with much irritability from—well, probably the influenza. Such are the vagaries of the convalescent mind.

Will the patient reader kindly accept the above as an introduction to something entirely different. One may now and then gather a wrinkle from a false start.

There is a wonderful show on at Olympia. They call it "Venice in London." It gives you as good an idea of the real thing as it is possible to get outside a Cook's trip to the city itself. This is no pasteboard and paint production, for here, beneath one of the mightiest roofs in the world, has been erected, at a fabulous cost, the exact counterpart of many famous houses, streets, and bridges in Venice. But, most wonderful of all, here are the real canals, over a mile run of them, and here are scores of real gondolas and gondoliers.

I had an opportunity of visiting Olympia several times during the erection of the houses and the laying of the canals, and I stood for many an hour allowing my imagination the widest latitude. Mr. Will. E. Chapman, the manager of the press department, enabled me to get some photographs during the building, and I give here some reproductions. How strange it seemed to be watching the building of Venice, the placing of stones upon which the balmy breezes of many centuries have breathed, the gilded façades that are yet the wonder of the world—all being reproduced in a comparative moment of time. Why, the walls are nigh as solid as the originals, and the Rialto Bridge of many memories, as large and so like; yes, so like the bridge we stood upon this many years ago. But I must not give way to what will prove the most dangerous infection at this show, sentimentality. Half of us will be imagining we are on our honeymoon once more, and forgetting the well stocked nursery at home.

To the speculative visitor this exhibition immediately suggests a bold master mind. This is provided in the person of Imre Kiralfy, whose name we have learned to link with the great Barnum visit. It is said that Kiralfy walked into Olympia, stood in the middle and took out his note book. In less than half an hour he had sketched out



"A PURE, WHITE VENICE."

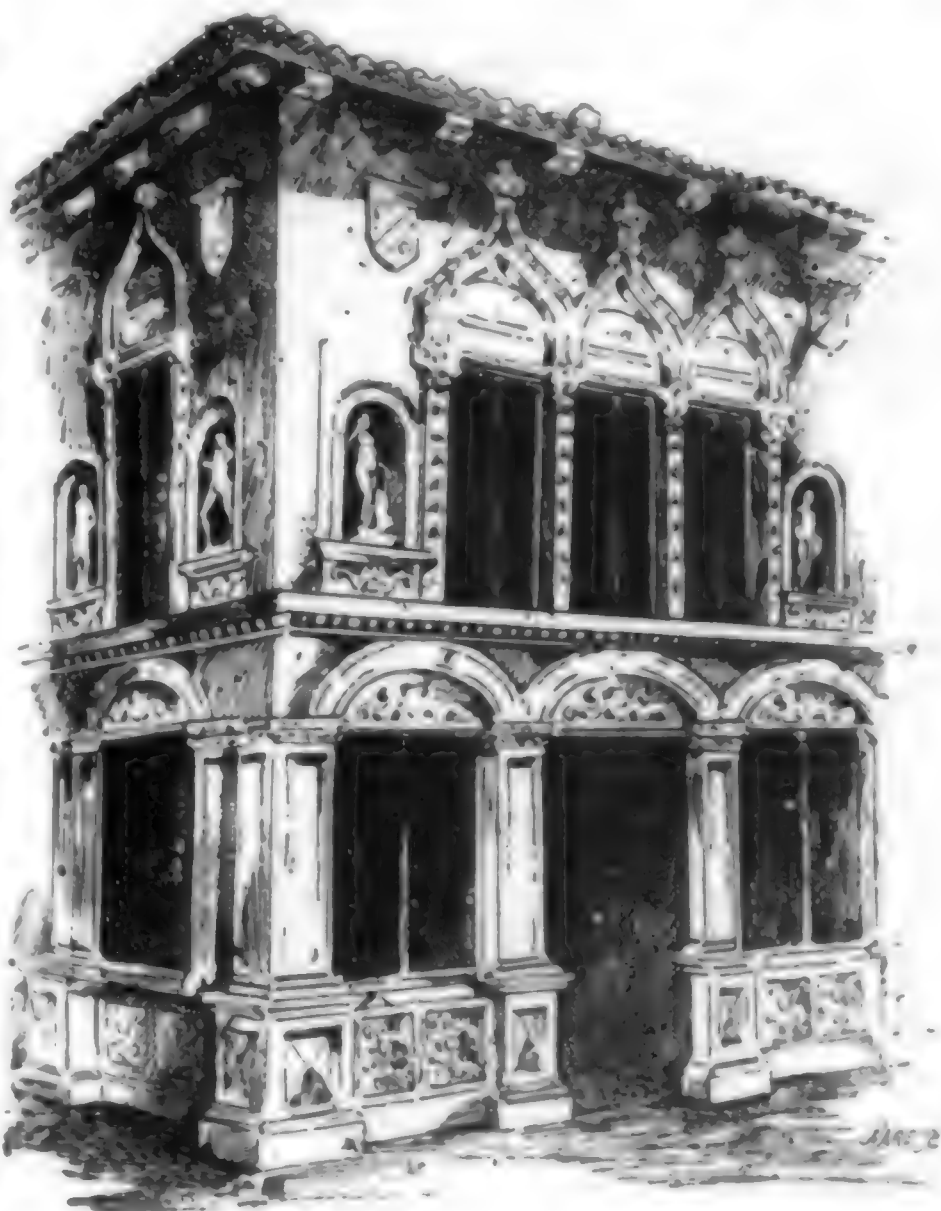


"AWAY YOU FLOAT UNDER INNUMERABLE BRIDGES."

the plans for an undertaking that has already cost between seventy and one hundred thousand pounds. He has practically divided the huge hall in halves, giving the half furthest from the entrance to modern Venice, whose water-ways, bridges and houses are depicted here in a bird's-eye view; and the other half to the grand stage, the grand canal, and the seating accommodation. A word or two about this portion of the affair.

Ten thousand people are able to sit and see the extraordinary stage performances, and as they sit comfortably in gallery, stalls, or boxes, their vision is called across the broad canal (it is four hundred feet long and one hundred and fifty wide), to gaze upon the striking series of scenes illustrative of the *Merchant of Venice*. This display is enhanced by the introduction of a procession of barges, a grand ballet, carnival and feast of lanterns, all woven into the fascinating story. Then there is the striking naval engagement, between the old Genoese and the Venetians, fought out bravely from the ancient barges, and on that grand scale of gorgeousness in which the heart of Kiralfy delights.

When one sees what can be done in this way by the simple expenditure of money, the wonder grows that it has not been before, and the wonder grows yet larger over the



"BY MARBLE PALACES."

possibilities of similar ventures. Men have looked ahead and prophesied the outcome of the inventive bump. Jules Verne will not be happy until he has made globe-trotting something akin to a back-garden stroll or a ride from the city to the suburbs. He would shoot us in a few minutes from London to New York through an Atlantic tunnel, and bring us back by a yet unlikelier route in less time.

But "Venice in London" sets the fancy a long way ahead of these things. Why go to New York at all, why not have that interesting hive of tall-talk brought to London? However quickly one may get to a place, it is much more comfortable to sit at home and have that place brought to us. The Olympian show proves this

between the two Poles, Darkest Africa included?

But to return to our text. Now that this great exhibition is well under weigh, a thought or two upon its building may touch the fickle chord of interest. But a few months ago Olympia was a barren space, and to picture it a scene in which ten thousand might nightly find delight and carry away a life-long impression was, to say the least, difficult. But man is very largely gifted as a mimic, and this place to-day is a striking proof of the faculty in full exercise. First there came one man with no other tools than pencil and paper. There is always the one man in these things, though a myriad may follow. Then others were there who soon saw eye to eye with



MODERN VENICE: A BIRD'S EYE VIEW.

practicable. Here are the walls and bridges of a town reproduced in texture, in colour, and size, in such a way as might easily deceive the eye of a native. By simply paying the entrance fee and chartering a gondola, the frail bark speeds its way among the streets; the houses from foundation to roof are there; the shops are open, and you pull up to buy of the pretty girl surrounded by fancy wares, or request your Jehu to stay while you watch the glass-blowers. Then away you float again under innumerable bridges, by marble palaces, and back into the grand canal. If this is possible, and I have several reasons for believing that "Venice in London" is no fairy dream, then why not other places, in fact, why should we not have shown to us any spot

the first man, but who would never have even dreamed this thing possible with their own eyes. Now capitalists were being sought, and induced in earnest language to invest. There is a lull, and then the huge hall resounds to the lifting and lowering of timber, to the carpenter's hammer, the plumber's mallet, and the innumerable satellites of stage craft. Before the show opened nearly two thousand men were engaged, French, Italian, American, English. For a long time it was hard to guess what the result would be; it seemed to be one eternal laying of floors, carefully packed in between. But, when it was remembered that over these floors there was to be a blue sea, in fact many tons of water, then it was easily understood that such a bed required

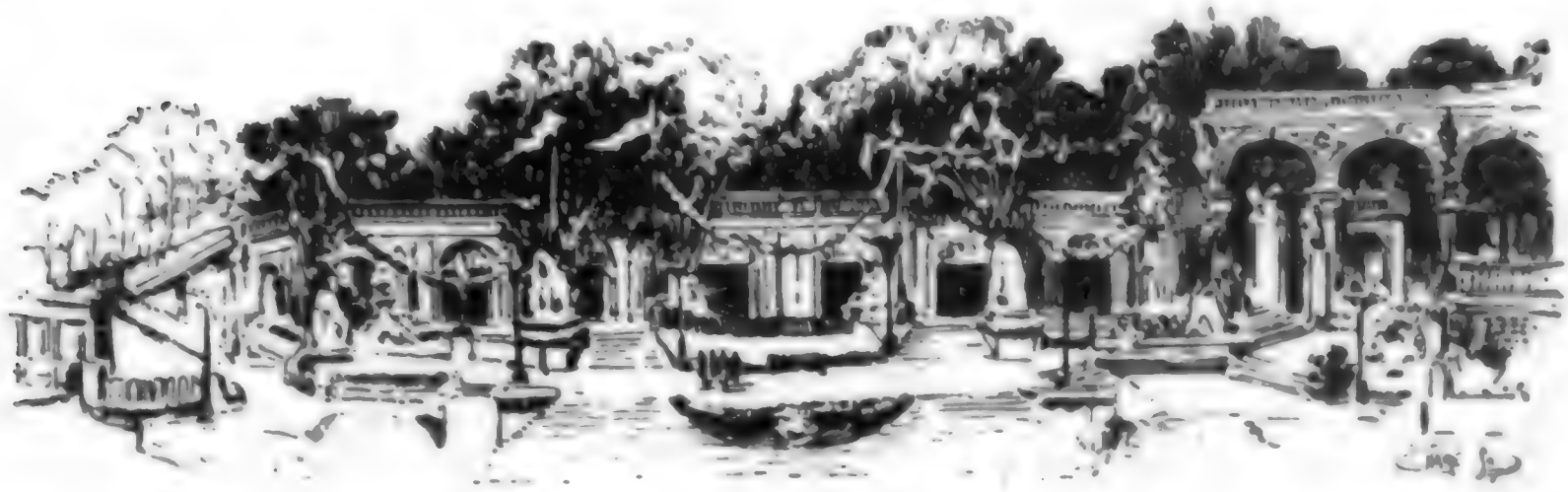
much laying. At last the canal ways were made, and for many days men were on hands and knees lining these spaces with sheet lead. This needed immense care, for a leakage would be hard to cure.

Still there was little at which to touch the poetic side of the onlooker. But at last there came one who possessed a model, and the weary eye rested upon it with a new hope, for here was, in miniature, what now is in reality. Once the canals were cut, the bridges fixed, and the skeletons of houses and palaces erected, the work made startling progress. Solid plaster casts, made of a new patent fireproof material (I think it is a mixture of asbestos and concrete) arrived in ship loads. It had all been made up on the spot, in Venice, and looked perfect, even in pieces. Skilled hands quickly fitted it piece by piece, until skeleton framework gradually assumed the forms of marble halls, with niches, figures and balustrades. At last, there stood a pure, white Venice, as she might look if newly built. But the artist was yet to come. Palette and brush soon placed the stains of centuries upon the pure alabaster, until every corner became a poem, only needing the rippling water at its foot to speak, to recall fond memories, to link the reproduction with the real stones of

Venice. And when the stones were placed and even the windows stained, and curtains hung, there yet remained a big void. What of that Italian sky, of which the poets sing. It came, the very heavens were imitated, and the twinkling stars were there.

In the meantime the stage, with its proscenium opening of three hundred feet was a scene of incessant toil. Shifting scenes and set-pieces of ponderous proportions, built as though to live a hundred years, were fixed for quick changing in the sight of the audience. It was a wilderness of intricacy, the successful development of which those in authority alone could see possible.

As the hour neared for the opening, load upon load of costumes arrived, some of them the perfection of the costumier's art, and then the brown-faced gondoliers took possession, and were busy for awhile preparing their little craft. The inrush of the waters was the final stroke, and 'midst the suppressed excitement of a thousand workers and the almost wild curiosity of the great B.P., the doors of Olympia were thrown open, and the first grand performance was witnessed. It may be even years ere those doors are finally closed upon this most remarkable of all the exhibitions.



SCENE I. - "THE MERCHANT OF VENICE."

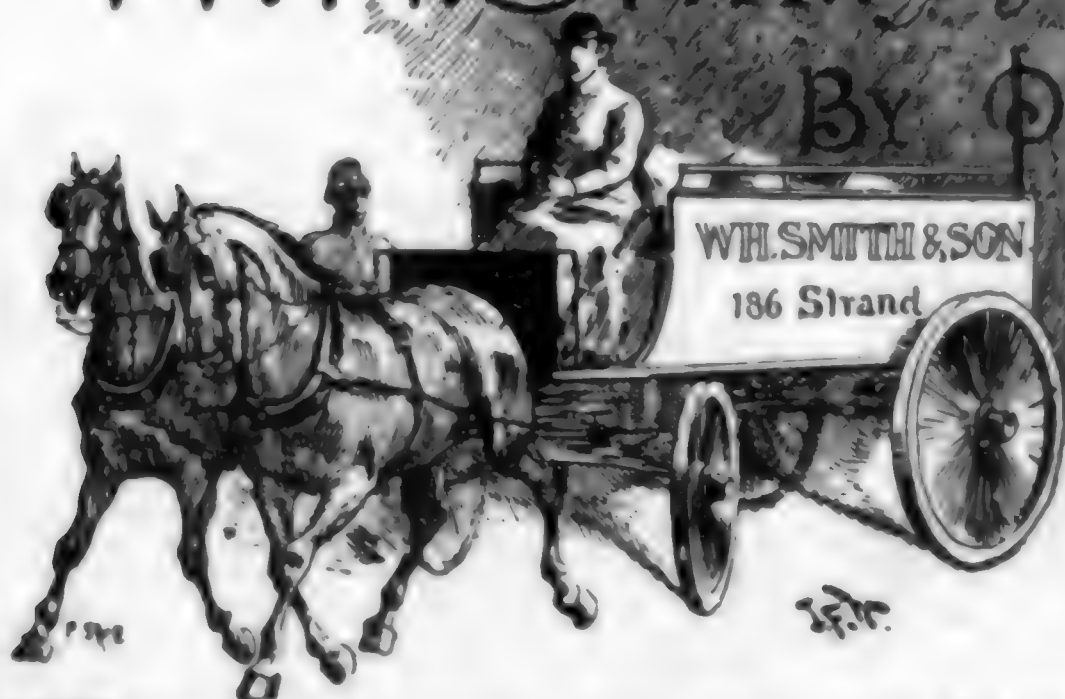


A FAVOURITE ON THE BOOKSTALLS.

The above is a Photo reduction from our Coloured Plate (20 inches by 15 inches) presented with our Christmas Annual last month.

W. H. Smith & Son's.

By Philip May



The business is still conducted upon the lines which Mr. Smith laid down, and the men rise as they did in the past, and the heads of departments study the comfort and welfare of those under them. "Are you really well enough for work?" was a question I heard addressed to

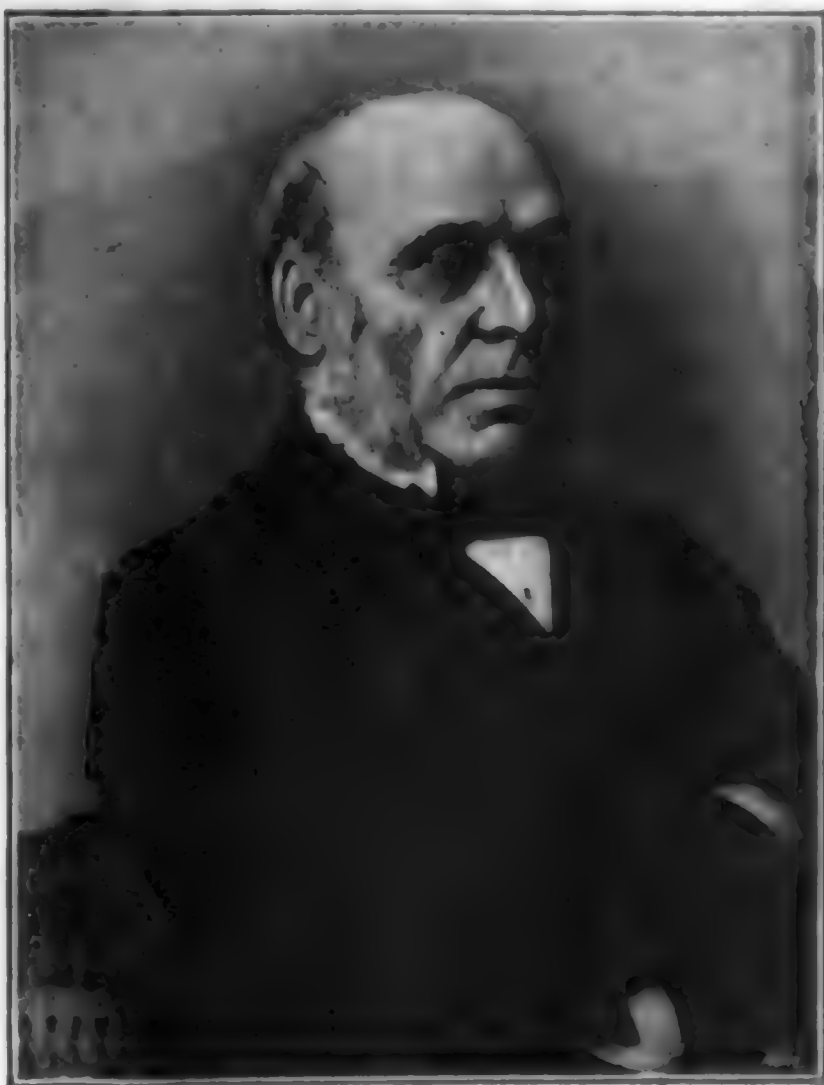
"**C**HE conduct of private affairs differs from that of public concerns only in magnitude; and those who know how to make the best use of men, conduct either private or public affairs judiciously; whilst those who have not this knowledge, will err in the management of both."

Socrates said this some two thousand three hundred years ago; still, his words remain true to-day; and the late Mr. W. H. Smith was, perhaps, the most successful of all his contemporaries, who engaged both in business and politics. He could not, as an orator, rival in brilliancy either Mr. Disraeli or Mr. Gladstone; but he could, and did, use men to the best advantage.

In the first place he obtained from those whom he employed, goodwill, respect, admiration, and even love. The last word is not too strong; nothing else could explain the feeling with which the rooms in which the late head of the firm had slept and worked were pointed out to me. To the speaker, the spots were sacred; and as he tenderly touched a peculiar latch, which had often been raised for Mr. Smith, when returning from the warehouse after the early morning work, I, though no thought-reader, could tell that he was thinking more than kindly of the dead.

Mr. Smith worked with his men, and he let them understand that for them, as well as for him, there was a future of higher and better things. He studied their comfort, too; and all he asked of them was that they should do their work as diligently and as conscientiously as he always did his.

one who had been away on sick-leave. "Turn down that gas a little lower, please," was said a little later to a group of young men who were making afternoon tea for themselves at a gas stove; and then it was explained to me that to turn the gas above a certain height was only waste, and that those employed could bring any food they liked and cook it there. Firmness and kindness must be shown by those who would make the best use of men; and *sua-viter in modo, fortiter in re*, would not



THE LATE RT. HON. W. H. SMITH.
[From photo by] (Lombardi, 13, Pall Mall East)

have been an unsuitable motto for the late statesman.

The business which he made of world renown was started by his father; and before that gentleman's ingenuity had been brought to bear upon the subject, all newspapers sent to the country were conveyed by the Post Office; but Mr. Smith established a service of express carts which collected the newspapers from the publishing offices and then hastened away to the most convenient spot for overtaking the morning coaches to the provinces. Hitherto, they had never carried papers of the day on which they started; and the saving of time was, of course, considerable. As an

instance of the enterprise of the founder of the firm, it may also be mentioned that, when William IV. died, Mr. Smith started at once for Holyhead; there he chartered a boat, in which he conveyed the papers containing the news to Dublin, where he arrived twenty-four hours before the king's messenger who took the official announcement.

Though the business continued its prosperous course, it was still small, compared to that done by the firm to-day, when Mr. W. H. Smith joined it, as an assistant and clerk, some five-and-forty years ago. At that time there was a stamp duty on newspapers, and no one even dreamed of penny papers; but the head of the firm had his carriage and pair and was a well-to-do and much respected citizen.

"I earned my partnership, and then I got it," Mr. W. H. Smith used to say with honest pride; and whilst he was earning it, and during the years when he was an active partner in the firm, he would be at his post in the early morning, directing the work, and assisting in packing up the parcels for morning distribution. During the day, too, he would deal with, at least, his fair share of the correspondence and accounts; and,

at all times, he showed a genuine enjoyment of hard work, though, like his father he also was endowed with original ideas. The bookstall business, the library, and the large book trade done by the firm, all owe their origin to the late Right Honourable member of the firm.

When Mr. W. H. Smith joined his father, there were a few stalls where newspapers were sold at the principal stations; but the business done was not large, and the sale of ephemeral literature did not yield much revenue. The repeal of the stamp duty and the introduction of the penny paper, however, wrought a complete change, which Mr. W. H. Smith was one of

the first to appreciate; and he directed his energies more especially to the development of the railway business, which is to-day of such an important character. He was the originator of the general railway contract system; and his industry, stability, and enterprise, inspired the railway directors with a respect, which, as time went on, won for him almost the whole of the English bookstall trade.

Still it was never the policy of Messrs. W. H. Smith and Son to oust others from the positions which they held, and they have never

abused the power which their large capital and vast organization have placed in their hands. "Live and let live," has ever been one of the firm's settled rules of action; and its relations with the trade generally have ever been kind and generous. Had the partners been grasping and selfish, they could have granted discounts and "cut prices" generally, with the result that within a year, they could have ruined almost the whole trade, and have obtained practically the entire provincial newspaper and book business for themselves.

My knowledge of the firm, I may perhaps be allowed to mention, is not merely derived from a few interviews with the



MR. MONGER.

From photo by]

[J. Monger, Strand.

heads of departments. As one of the trustees of the Newsagents' and Booksellers' Union, I am in a position to hear all the trade grievances: yet, as wholesale agents, I have never heard any complaint against them whatever, though this department of their business is very large; whilst, as to their retail trade, some say that they think the firm does not pay local rates and taxes in proportion to the trade done, and object to the boys being sent out of the stations to deliver papers to the houses of their customers; but, the general feeling seems to be, "I don't complain of Smith and Son's; they don't give discounts, or abuse their power."

How great that power is, the reader will perhaps be able to understand better, if he will kindly accompany me to 186, Strand, in the early morning. It is half-past three, and already the familiar red carts are to be seen in Fleet Street, waiting to collect papers, hastening to some railway terminus, or returning to 186, Strand. Outside this building, several carts are being unloaded, men and lads are arriving to commence their days' work, and at four o'clock are all in their places.

Mr. Monger, the courteous head of the newspaper department, wishes me good morning, and says he will explain everything to me directly he has got the work fairly under way. The packers' work begins, he tells me, at three o'clock on Fridays and Saturdays, when the bulk of the weekly papers have to be dealt with, and at four o'clock on other mornings.

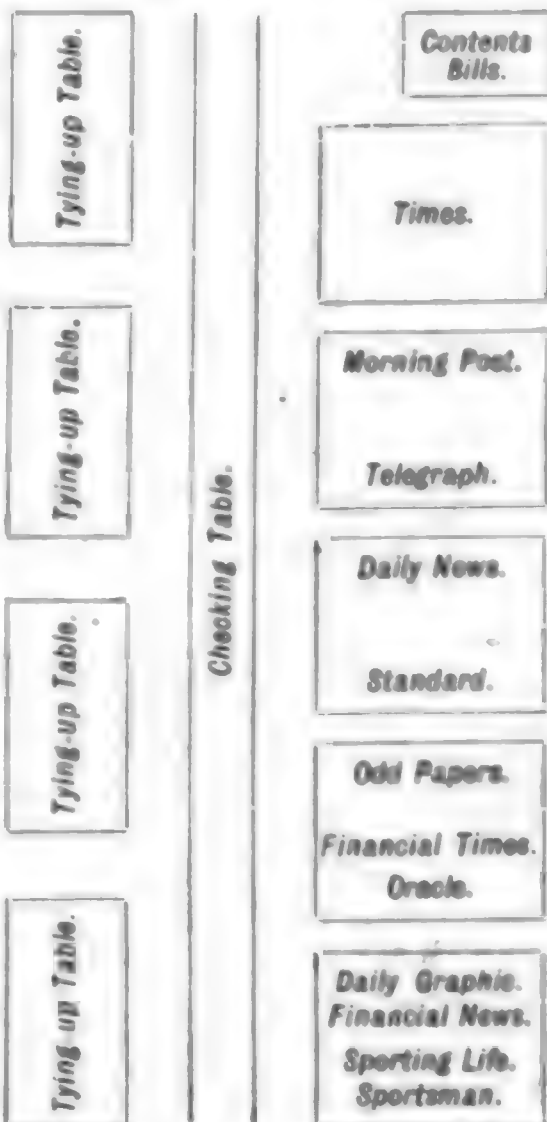
Men are busily engaged in bringing in papers from the carts, and each of the chief morning papers has a special table, whilst several of the minor papers are placed upon another; and at about five minutes past four the work of packing up the various parcels begins in earnest. From the sketch of the western side of the newspaper room, it will be seen how the papers are placed. Well, a piece of brown paper, folded to a convenient size, and with the address printed on a label stuck on the outside, and a printed list of papers to be enclosed stuck on one of the



MR. F. SMITH, M.P. FOR THE STRAND.
From photo by [Ball, 17, Regent Street.]

flaps inside, is handed to one of the men at the table nearest to the door. The man who receives it puts in the number of copies required of his paper, and then passes it to his neighbour, and when it has been round the tables devoted to

the minor papers, the packet is passed on rapidly from table to table, and at each of these the number required of one or more of the great dailies is inserted. Then the packet arrives at the table where a man, with wonderful rapidity, takes up one of each of the contents bills before him, and throws in his little heap. The parcel, which, even if addressed to a news-agent in a small way of business, has grown to considerable proportions, is now handed to one of a row of men standing at a long table that runs parallel to and east of the newspaper tables, and here the contents of each parcel is checked, and the list of contents is marked so that in case of any mistake it can be known who checked that particular parcel. The



checker may shout out, "one *Daily News*," and a boy with a copy of this paper will run to supply the want from a heap under his charge; whilst, should a *Daily Chronicle* be wanted, another youth will hasten to supply the deficiency. Owing to this system of checking the contents of each packet, mistakes, Mr. Monger told me, are very rare.

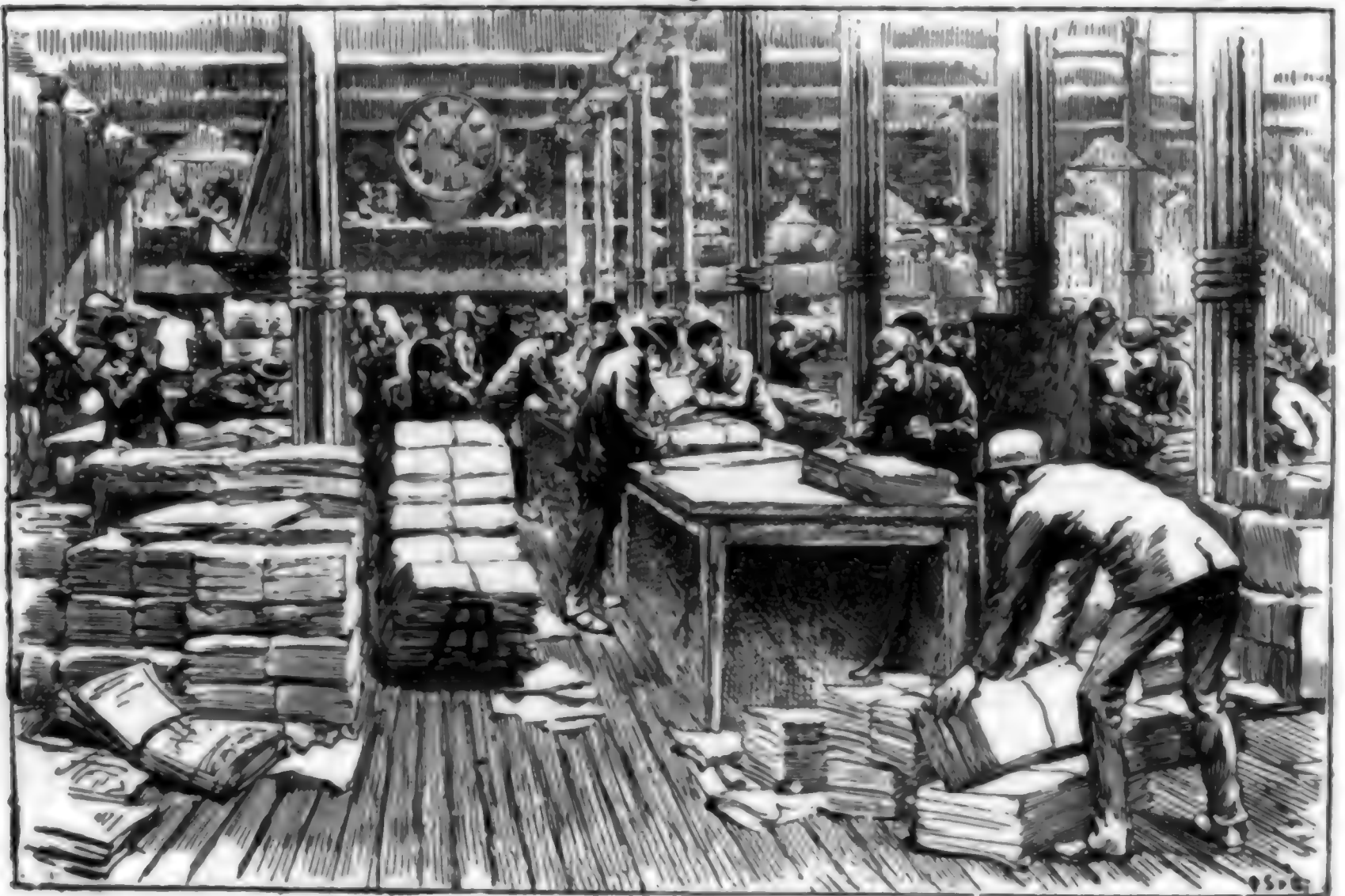
Up to twenty-five minutes past four only those packets have been done up in which no copies of the *Times* are to be inserted; and then men come in with the inner sheet of that paper. Now all work at a speed which is astonishing to a stranger; and when I have become accustomed to the sight, Mr. Monger kindly suggests that I should accompany him to see the wonders below.

Here I see machines at work, by which papers are folded ready for delivery to customers from the different stations; but some newspapers are now delivered folded, and the proprietors of the *Daily Telegraph* are spending £100,000 in machinery, in order to meet the wishes of the wholesale and retail newsagents in this matter; and Messrs. Smith & Son are already beginning to sell some of their folding machines.

I was next introduced to the lady who presides over the refreshment department, and was favoured with an excellent cup of tea. The coffee, too, I was told, was the

best to be obtained; and any person employed by the firm could obtain a cup of either and a slice of bread and butter for a penny, whilst the carters are supplied free of charge, either before starting work at three o'clock, or when they return with a load of papers. The refreshment department, I may perhaps remark, is the only one that does not show a profit on the balance sheet; but in thus providing for the comfort of the men, Mr. Monger finds a sufficient gain.

A youth, when he enters the house—I was told on pursuing my way—is set to work to do up for private customers papers which are to be sent by post. The address is printed on the outside of the wrapper, and inside is a list of the papers to be enclosed. The work in fact is done in a similar way to that of preparing the parcels for the newsagents and bookstall clerks, but is of course on a much smaller scale. The youths soon take kindly to the early hours, and after a time become wonderfully adept at doing up the small parcels. Then they are promoted, and may take a place at the minor daily paper table, pass on to a table devoted to one of the great dailies, and after some years may rise to the important position of checker. Few leave the service of the firm after having stayed one year; and the husband of the lady who presides over the refreshment department



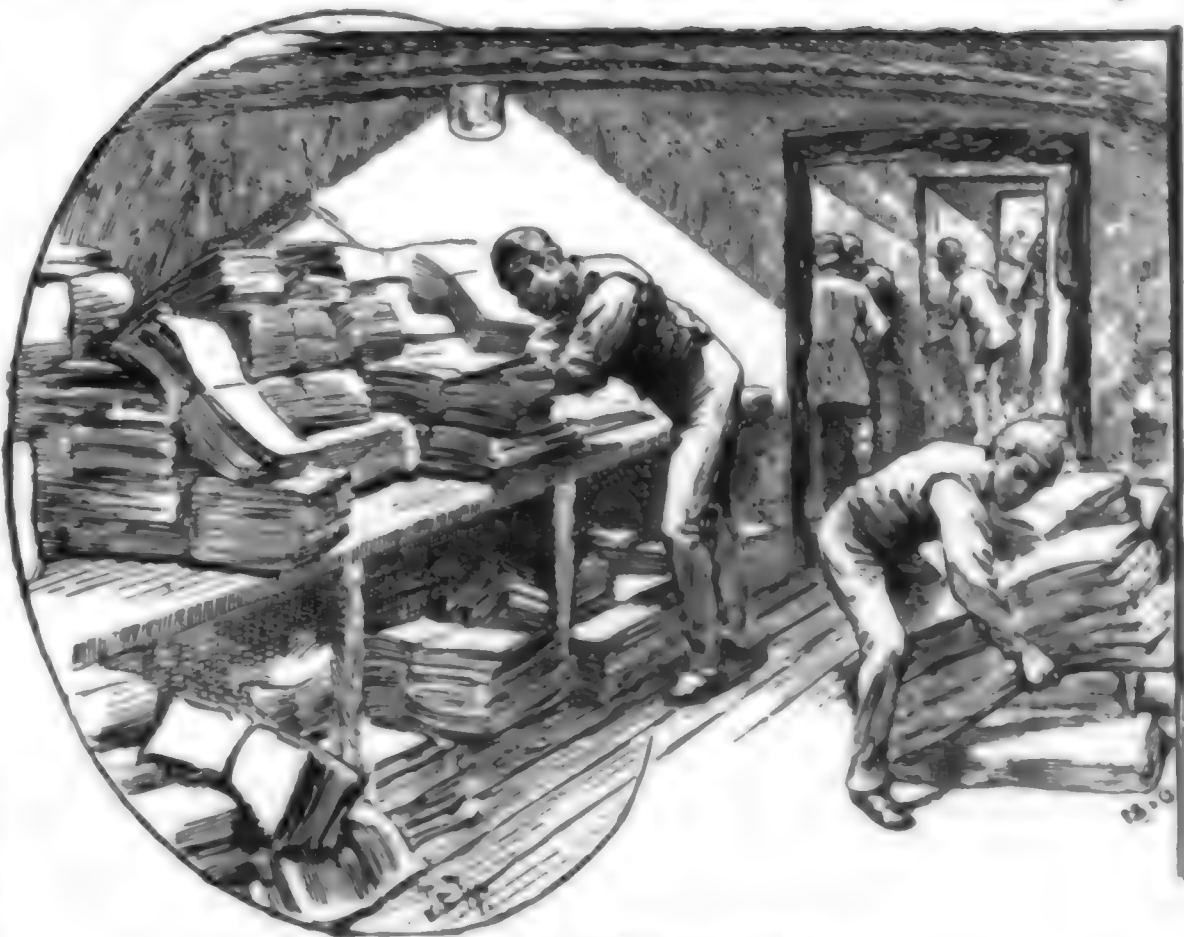
IN THE NEWSPAPER ROOM AT FOUR O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING.

is one of several who have seen fifty years' service.

Mr. Monger was now about to proceed to Euston station, and he kindly allowed me to accompany him. We sat on the box seat of a light van, drawn by two splendid horses; and though we stopped once to deliver a parcel of papers to the newsagent who supplies papers, specially printed on good paper, to the royal palaces, we covered the distance in very quick time.

At Euston I was allowed to inspect the long row of newspaper vans owned by the firm, and attached to the 5.15 train. These carriages are built something in the style of the American cars, and the men can walk from one to another. They were nearly full of papers, and had tables in each; and parcels are done up in the train, just as they are in the early morning at 186, Strand. Next to Messrs. W. H. Smith & Son's last van is one belonging to the North-Western Railway Company, and this van has been specially constructed for the work to be done in it. The first compartment, which is small, is intended for a clerk of the firm, who has a desk there; and close by his side is an open window through which parcels are passed to the railway company's clerk in charge. Each parcel is weighed and entered by both clerks; and this work begins directly the train steams out of Euston, and continues until all the parcels have been passed into the railway company's van.

We had only just finished our inspection of these newspaper railway carriages, when there was a shout, and a heavy railway van drove up on the platform, and a lighter one belonging to the firm drew up in the station court-yard. Each was laden with copies of the *Times*; and, as the train was already due to start, there was a little friendly contest between the company's and the firm's men, to see which would have their load in the train first. Messrs. W. H. Smith and Son's men were successful, but only by a few seconds; and then, as the long train started, men began to sort the papers and pack the parcels which, as the train rushes through the stations, will be



THE NEWSPAPER RAILWAY CARRIAGE.

thrown from the railway company's van.

A few minutes later we were on our way to King's Cross Station, and though not quite in such a hurry, now that the early morning mails had started, we went at a good pace to the Great Northern terminus. Here, as at several other stations, the firm have a covered court, where packing goes on in just the same way as at the Strand house.

As soon as the morning paper work is over, the distribution of the weeklies begins; and the men work for about eleven hours a day. Dealing with the "returns," as unsold copies are called, occupies much time; for these have to be checked, as carefully as papers sent out, before they are all carted back to the places whence they came.

The "returns," however, from this firm are small in proportion to the quantity taken, and are much under the average of the whole trade. As an example, I may



THE CONTENTS BILL TABLE

perhaps mention that Messrs. W. H. Smith and Son, ordered and received a total number of 101,348 of the copies of the first six numbers of this magazine, and their "returns," less copies sold to them again, to supply their customers' orders for back numbers, only amounted to 3,828 copies. They sell, in fact, about one sixth of the total circulation.

But I am straying away into another department, and must take leave of Mr. Monger, who has been at the head of the newspaper department for twenty-six years, and has altogether spent forty years in the service of the firm. Thanking him for his great kindness, and armed with an introduction, I enter the new building in Arundel Street, where I notice the large number of clerks in the cashier's department, which looks something like the interior of a bank; and then I make my way up stairs to the book department.

Mr. W. F. Kingdon, the head of the book department, kindly conducted me around his vast domain. His department, he told me, grew to large dimensions under its first manager, the late Mr. J. Sandifer, who was engaged from Hamilton, Adams & Co., over forty years ago, and remained with the firm until his death. The large staff of clerks and packers are mostly old servants, who constantly handle vast masses of goods with an ease and speed only acquired by long practice. Amongst these Mr. Kingdon reckons himself, as he entered the department as a junior in 1861, and was connected with it in various positions until it was placed under his charge on the death of his predecessor in 1887.

"The goods sold spread themselves well over the productions of the various publishers, following necessarily the public taste; but now and again a book will secure an exceptional sale," Mr. Kingdon said in answer to a question. "Of 'Shilling Shockers,'

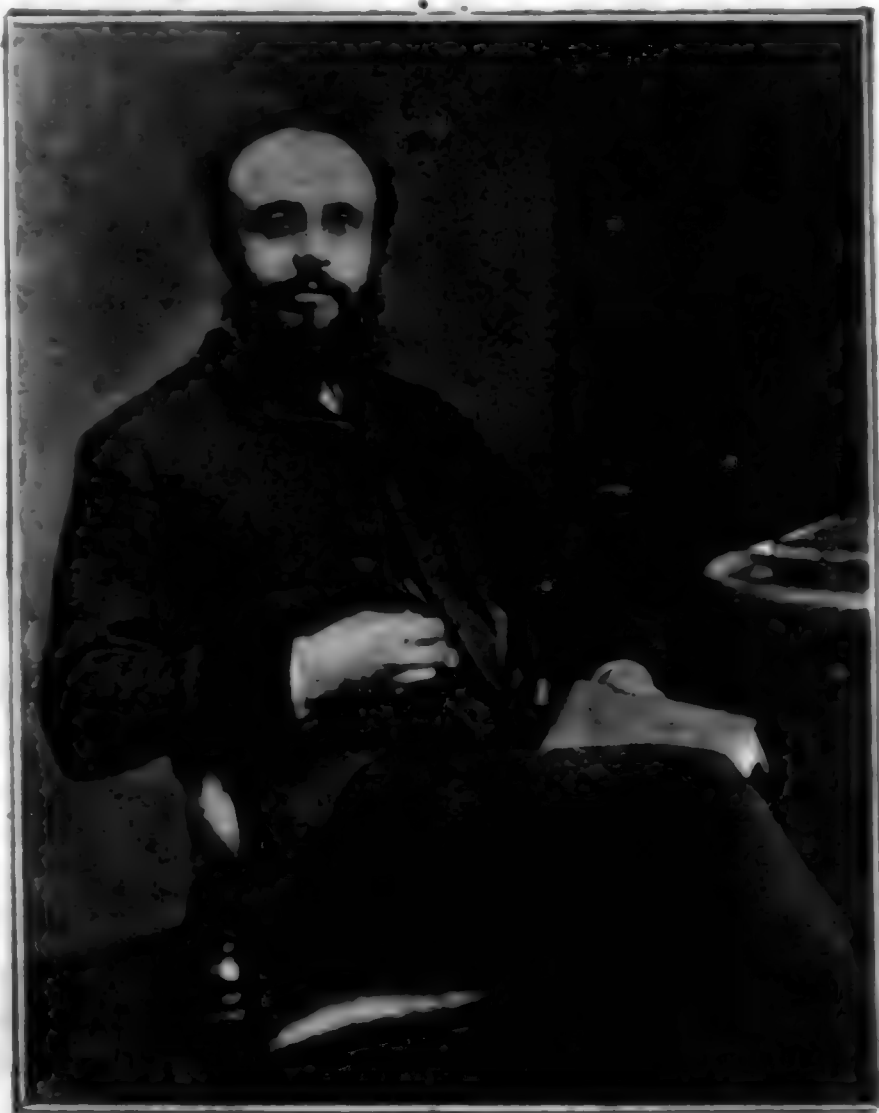
as they are sometimes termed, 'Called Back' was the first I can remember that did so, and 'The Mystery of a Hansom Cab,' would rank next. But it is not always the sensational novel that scores. The first great success I can recall, was 'The Koran,' issued during the Turkish War, by Warne & Co., in various editions, which were sold faster than they could be printed. Since then, Max O'Rell's first book, and more recently, 'Three Men in a Boat,' 'Idle Thoughts of an Idle Fellow,' and 'Looking Backward,' have also all done well—the last book, by the bye, one of real educational value to a thoughtful reader. Just now, the new cheap monthlies are making the

record, but if they go on increasing in number, there will not be room for all. Two of the oldest sixpenny magazines are dying this month, it is reported."

"Do I believe in coloured plates? Well, they have increased in number to such an extent that I do not think people set store by them as they did in the past. Now I think, though they are largely bought, they are looked on in their true light, as advertisements only of the publications issuing them, and are taken home for the children's entertainment.

In this department, we deal with less than half of them, and wish they were fewer."

"Yes, Rudyard Kipling's short stories are very popular, and are having an enormous sale. His last volume "Life's Handicap," published at six shillings has sold almost as freely as his shilling books. The six-shilling novel does not sell very largely now, and the publishers are recognising this by issuing three-and-six series, equal to the old six-shilling ones. Marion Crawford's are mostly obtainable now, at three-and-six, and there is a large and continuous demand for them. A fine selection of books at three-and-six has been placed on the market, during the past two



From photo by)

MR. KINGDON.

[E. Eastham,
Wellington Road, Eccles.

or three years. The two-shilling novel is still a favourite with railway travellers. We devote this room, you see, to the books of that class, published by Chatto and Windus; another here to those of Smith, Elder and Co., whose books by the author of 'Molly Bawn,' do not lose their popularity."

"This room, now used for the current number of magazines exclusively, was once used for Mr. Smith's bed-room. The old house, now far too small for the business, supplied rooms formerly for the head of the firm, and served also as a residence for the managers of departments, some of whom were married, and had families growing up around them."

During the conversation, we crossed a bridge—called by the men the Fifth Bridge because it was built after the Forth—connecting the upper floors of the old house with the new building, where we reached the Library Department, and I was introduced to Mr. Faux.

This gentleman told me that the library department owed its origin to the late head of the firm, and had proved one of the most remunerative. It was started about thirty-two years ago, and it has been under the superintendence of its present chief for the last twenty-two years. Previously Mr. Faux was inspector of bookstalls, and he told me how rare an occurrence it was for any bookstall clerk to attempt to deceive the firm. The firm trusts the men, and they deserve the firm's confidence.

Mr. Faux, I found, was a librarian who loved his books; and in a genial way he sang the praises of the past, and bemoaned the present paucity of literary giants. Thackeray, his favourite author, is gone; and Dickens, Kingsley, and George Eliot, belong to the glorious past, though they still live in the children to which their art gave birth. George Meredith and W. E. Norris are treading in the path of Thackeray, but their pictures, in comparison with those of the great master, are but fine pen-and-ink sketches to brilliant oil paintings. Walter Besant is always pleasing as a summer sky, and William Black as smooth as a Scotch lake on a calm day; Marion Crawford, though he does not invariably point so good a moral, is one of the authors whose works are most in demand; James Payn's pen is not as active as of yore, but he is not forgotten; Hall Caine has won for himself a place in the front rank, and not without deserving it; Miss Braddon and Florence Marryat hold their own, and each has her own style



From photo by]

MR. FAUX.

[Mayall & Co., Brighton.

and her own admirers; and I must not forget to mention Thomas Hardy, Mrs. Oliphant, Baring Gould, Clarke Russell, J. M. Barrie, Hawley Smart, Mrs. Alexander, and Manville Fenn. Davenport Adams, too, is a favourite with those who occasionally find a little time for reading books, bright and cheerful, though a little more solid than fiction; and Andrew Lang's fairy stories are often asked for.

Stanley's last book and "Robert Elsmere" have been the two greatest recent library successes. Rudyard Kipling's books are very popular in London, but his style and treatment are peculiar, and as yet he has not quite won the approval of the provinces.

Mr. Faux has already this year subscribed for 131 novels in two or three volumes; but he prefers books that appear in one volume, and thinks that publishers would do as well if they were to cease to issue works of fiction at a higher price than three-and-sixpence.

Books of a more solid character than the average three-volume novel remain in demand for a much longer time; and when the surplus copies are disposed of, they realize a much larger proportion of the original cost. Messrs. W. H. Smith & Son issue at regular intervals a catalogue of surplus library books, and there you may see



MR. WILSON.

From photo by]

[A. Weston, 24, Newgate Street, E.C.

that, whilst the ordinary three-volume novel is offered for three shillings, the average charge for other works is about a third instead of a tenth of the published price.

The arrangement of the books in the library, as Mr. Faux pointed out to me, is very simple. The shelves are marked from A to Z, and whilst each well-known writer has his works on the shelf that bears the first letter of his surname, books by writers who have yet to make a reputation are to be found under the first letter of the title.

Parcels of books are sent out daily to the various bookstalls, of which the firm has over 600; and subscribers to the library can thus obtain any work that they prefer.

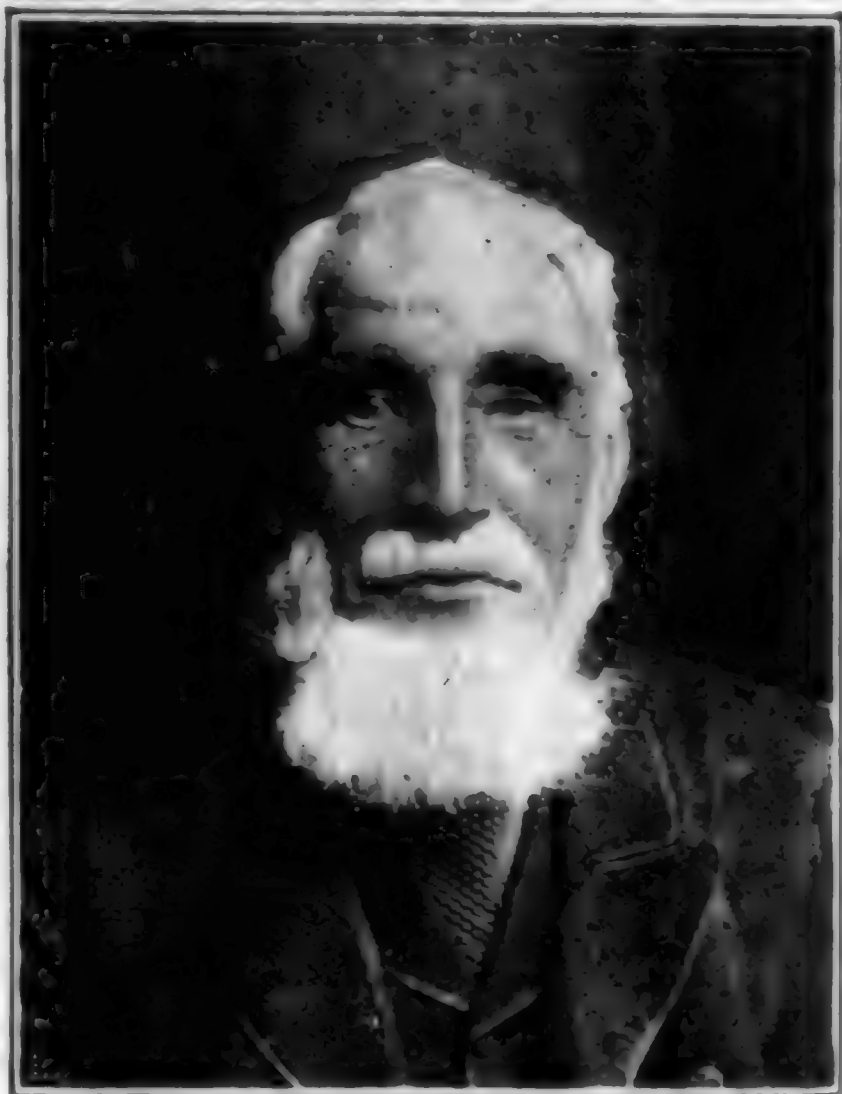
When the parcels are returned, they are first checked, and then replaced upon the shelves. The clerk in charge of a stall is expected to examine each work as it is returned to him, and books are seldom sent back to the firm defective; but a few years ago a lady subscriber had a habit of tearing out pages to make pipe lights for her husband, who was eventually called upon to make good the damage done; and rumour says that since then he has always preferred matches, even to spills made from novels of the most glowing and brilliant description.

Still, wear and tear will tell even upon the strongest constitutions; and a hospital is provided for the invalids, as well as

skilful surgeons to bind up their gaping wounds. "Two into one won't go," we used to say when we were children; but Mr. Faux's medical staff can make two sick children go into one that is well, and leave a remainder, though not a very valuable one.

Talking of remainders, reminds me of another lucrative branch of the business, under the charge of the chief librarian. I dare say you have seen some bound volumes of the older magazines, and other books of attractive appearance, offered for sale on the bookstalls at ridiculously low prices. Well, those are "remainders." A publisher has wanted to clear out a stock, and Mr. Faux has helped him; and the result is that the public can often obtain a bargain and yet leave a little commission for the bookstall clerk, who is generally a much more civil servant than most of those in the Civil Service.

It was a cobbler, no doubt you will remember, who said that there was nothing like leather; but I trust that you will not be surprised to hear that Mr. Smith, when First Lord of the Admiralty, preferred canvas. "Safe bind, safe find," is a good old saying; and if it is true anywhere, it is in a library. So Mr. Smith thought; and when he presented a library to the crew of H.M.S. *Agamemnon*, it was bound in stout coloured canvas, known as buckram. Mr. Smith was a frequent visitor to the library department, often coming down to the house to consult Mr. Faux about books to



MR. FAUX.

be bound in his favourite style and presented to some ship, village, or charitable institution. The new binding proved a great success, as it not only lasts a long time, but also keeps clean ; and, as I shook hands with Mr. Faux, and thanked him for what I had been able to glean from his vast store of knowledge, he asked me to mention the fact that it was first used by the late Mr. Smith.

The general public have all heard of Messrs. W. H. Smith and Son's newspaper, book, and library departments ; but, besides these branches of the business, there are also an extensive railway advertising department, a carpentering department, and a printing department, any one of which alone would be considered a large and lucrative business by the average commercial man. Here, however, they are all links in a connected chain, that turns the wheel of fortune.

Mr. F. J. F. Wilson, the genial chief, showed me round the extensive premises which have been under his charge for about twelve years.

In the artists' rooms well-paid draughtsmen are employed to design the chromo-lithographs which adorn the railway stations, advertise the wares of Brown, Jones, Robinson and Co., and tell the unwary traveller—who wants to know whether he has arrived at his destination—that he ought to use their soap, cement, and starch, as there are none nicer. A pretty nun, with well-washed face and starched cap, cementing on a dog's severed caudal appendage, points a moral and adorns the advertiser's tale.

The firm have obtained an excellent reputation for printing in colours ; and Mr. Wilson showed me large finished oil paintings which, when reproduced as chromo-lithographs, will adorn the stations, hoardings and shop windows, and drew my attention to the fact, that even the coloured inks used in their production, are manufactured upon the premises.

Manufactured is not, perhaps, a good

word ; for here, in the printing department, machinery is being used on all sides and in every corner, and all the latest inventions have been adopted in order to obtain the best possible result. The pretty nun, that advertises Brown, Jones, and Robinson's wares, requires ten or twelve separate printings before she emerges in all her glory ; and I see her grow from a mere shadow until, at last, she can proudly boast that there is "nun nicer."

But I must hurry on to the carpentering department, which for more than a quarter of a century has been under the charge of Mr. W. Pope. Here the coloured advertisements, which I saw printed, will be framed

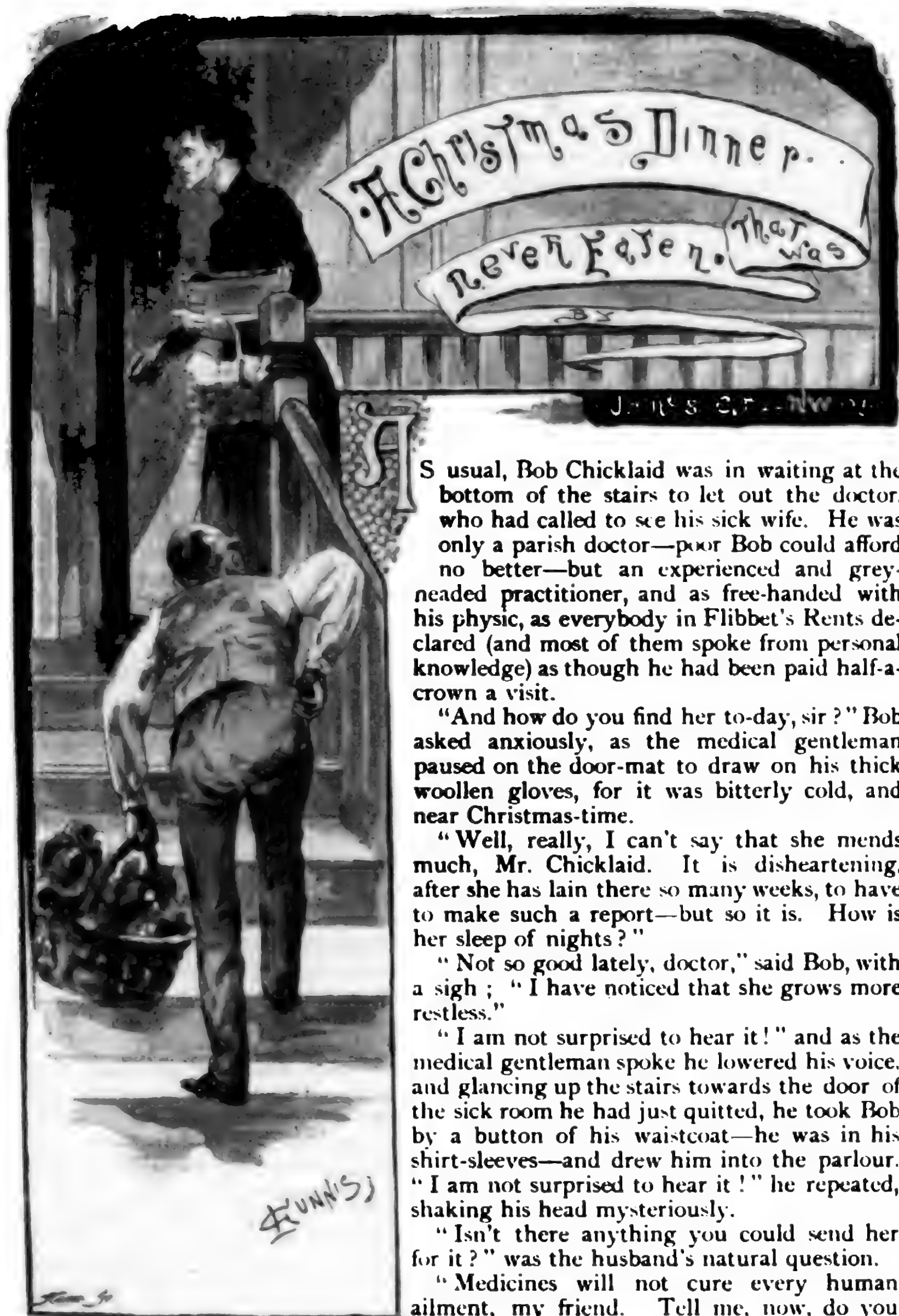
and, perhaps, glazed ; and Mr. James Adams, who showed me round, in the absence of his senior, drew my attention to bookstalls of various sizes, and in different stages of growth.

Leaving this department it was my good fortune to meet Mr. Peter McGaw, the Master of the Horse, who kindly conducted me over the stables, where there are at present fifty-two strong horses, twenty-three light carts, and nine pair-horse vans. The horses were enjoying their evening meal, each in its own stall, with its name painted up and its harness near at hand. The



MR. MCGAW.

stables have all modern improvements ; and each driver has his locker, and each stable its corn bin. The farrier's shop is also a part of the establishment, and a very necessary one, too, as each horse has to be shod about forty times a year. There is also a mess room for the men, provided with a cooking stove and culinary utensils ; and when I left the premises of the firm, I had at any rate learned this lesson from my visit, that if you would make the best use of men, you must carefully study their comfort and convenience. This knowledge was, I think, the secret of the great success which the late Mr. W. H. Smith won and deserved ; for he was always generous and just, and not only great, but also good.



AS usual, Bob Chicklaid was in waiting at the bottom of the stairs to let out the doctor, who had called to see his sick wife. He was only a parish doctor—poor Bob could afford no better—but an experienced and grey-headed practitioner, and as free-handed with his physic, as everybody in Flibbet's Rents declared (and most of them spoke from personal knowledge) as though he had been paid half-a-crown a visit.

"And how do you find her to-day, sir?" Bob asked anxiously, as the medical gentleman paused on the door-mat to draw on his thick woollen gloves, for it was bitterly cold, and near Christmas-time.

"Well, really, I can't say that she mends much, Mr. Chicklaid. It is disheartening, after she has lain there so many weeks, to have to make such a report—but so it is. How is her sleep of nights?"

"Not so good lately, doctor," said Bob, with a sigh; "I have noticed that she grows more restless."

"I am not surprised to hear it!" and as the medical gentleman spoke he lowered his voice, and glancing up the stairs towards the door of the sick room he had just quitted, he took Bob by a button of his waistcoat—he was in his shirt-sleeves—and drew him into the parlour. "I am not surprised to hear it!" he repeated, shaking his head mysteriously.

"Isn't there anything you could send her for it?" was the husband's natural question.

"Medicines will not cure every human ailment, my friend. Tell me, now, do you

think it possible that your wife has anything on her mind?"

Bob Chicklaid opened his eyes so wide that not only his forehead but half way to the top of his bald head was ruled with wrinkles.

"If, when you say mind, you mean conscience, why, all I have got to say is, that if ever a woman did her duty as a wife and a mother——"

"I am not disputing that, Mr. Chicklaid. All the same, I am very much mistaken if your wife is not at the present time brooding over something that very much distresses her."

"Some secret?"

"Some secret trouble, I should rather say. I may, of course, be wrong, but that is my impression. You need not mention to her that I have spoken of it; but, if you will be advised by me, you will try and find out what it is. I have no wish to alarm you unnecessarily, but, in her present condition, mental worry may have a very serious effect on her."

This was startling news indeed. Something on her mind that was unknown to him! What, after seven - and - twenty years of unbroken trust and confidence? If anyone else had insinuated such a thing, Bob Chicklaid would have done his best to knock him down out of hand; but it was different coming from the doctor, part of whose business, no doubt, it was to make a study of such things. And there might, perhaps, be some little matter——. Bosh! it was impossible. The only thing in the nature of a secret his wife had ever kept from him was when their son, Bob, then in his eighteenth year, quarrelled with his sweetheart, and was fool enough, in consequence, to enlist for a soldier. Bob was earning good money then at his trade as a cork-cutter, and his poor Sally's secret was that

she scraped and hoarded every shilling she could legitimately lay her hands on until she had saved twenty pounds wherewith to buy Bob out of the army. But that was the only thing in all their married life she had ever hid from him.

"As for her having much, in a general way, on her mind at the present time? why, of course she had. And me out of work," the cork-cutter pursed his lips ruefully, as he reflected on how much. "She has me, having been without a stroke of work for more than a month, on her mind. And, as if that wasn't a crusher enough, there are

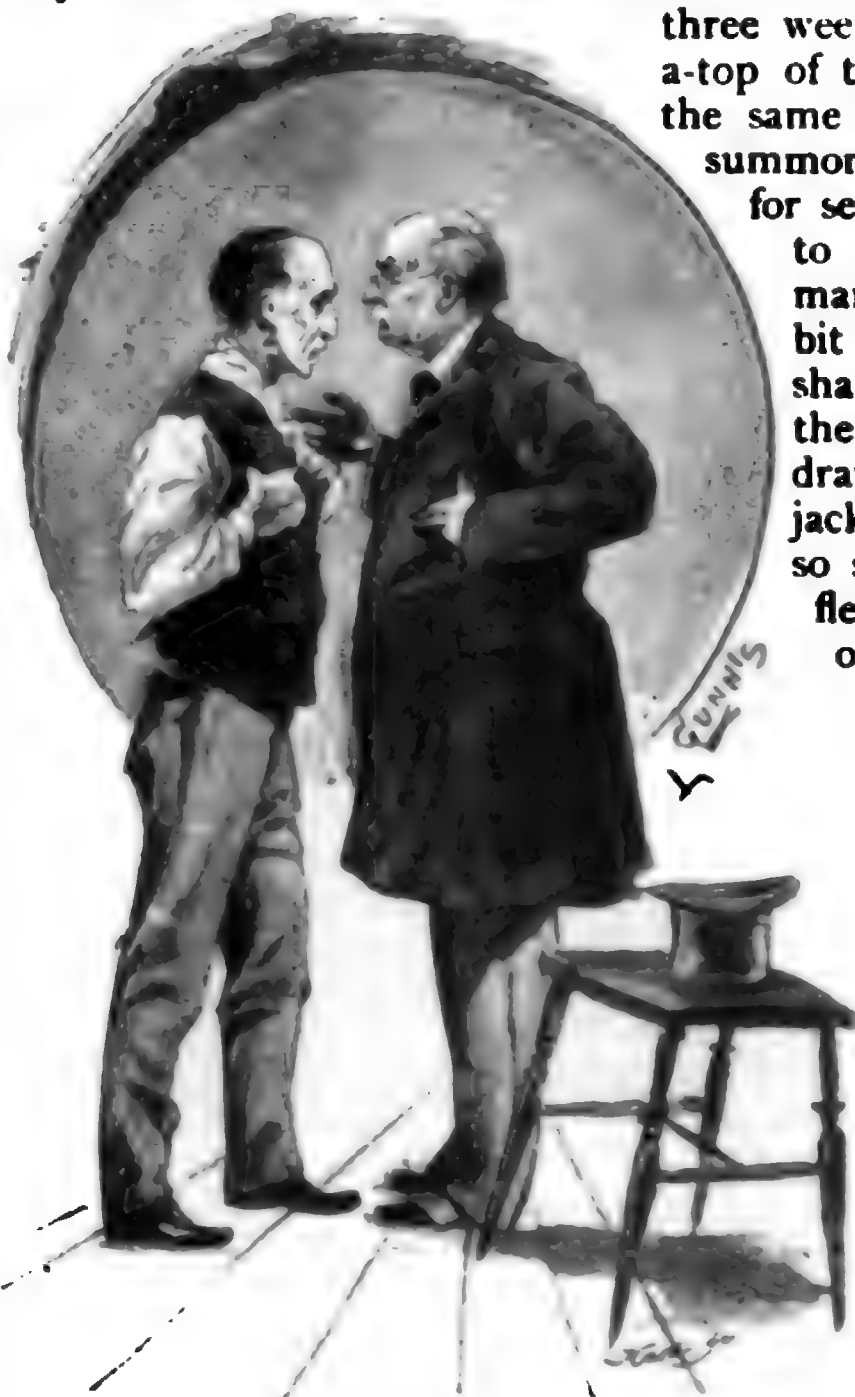
three weeks' unpaid rent, piled a-top of that, and chucked into the same balance against us; a summons, now in the house, for seventeen and six owing to the chandler's shop man; with another heavy bit more to the bad, in the shape of our Bill getting the sack from the linen-draper's on account of his jacket and trousers being so shabby, they were a reflection on the gentility of the establishment.

Leaving us only Mary's nine shillings a week wages from the box-making, and young Phil's two shillings a week, as a half-timer, to rub on with. That is trouble enough, I should think, to worry a sick woman, bed-ridden with rheumatism, or whatever it is, without hinting about secrets and concealments."

Nevertheless, Bob Chicklaid could not disguise from himself that his wife seemed to grow, day by day, more despondent and low-spirited, and more than once, waking in the night, unless his ears strangely deceived him, she was quietly crying. But, as he sadly thought, he knew so well what she was crying about, it were needless to enquire.

"I will tell Mary what the doctor says, when she comes home," was Bob Chicklaid's final conclusion, "and take her opinion on it."

And he did so, and Mary, who was a



"SOME SECRET?"



MARY WAS GRAVELY CONCERNED, AND UNDERTOOK TO DO HER BEST TO ASCERTAIN.

good girl, and now of the same age as her brother Bob when his mother saved up, in secret, to buy him out of the army, was gravely concerned, and undertook to do her best to ascertain if there really was any ground for Dr. Bunting's conjecture.

She went up to her sick mother's room, there and then, and, after a while, came down with a smile on her face, her father was immensely relieved and pleased to see, but, at the same time, with tears brimming in her eyes, which he was puzzled to account for.

"Oh, it is all right, father, at least, when I say that, it isn't exactly all right, because I don't know what is to be done. I have found out what it is, anyhow."

"And what is it, Polly?"

"It is about Christmas Day, father. That is what dear mother is fretting about."

"The day after to-morrow!" said Bob Chicklaid dolefully. "What about Christmas Day, Polly?"

"Poor mother's trouble is that all the years she has been married, even of late years, when we have been so much worse off than we used to be, she has always, somehow, managed that we should all be comfortable together on that day, and

have what might be called a Christmas dinner, and the little extras that you and the boys and girls look forward to; and this time there can be nothing at all—not even the poor dinner we have had to make shift with on Sundays. Poor mother! she seems quite broken down by the thought of it—it breaks her heart, she says, and oh, father! she cried when she told me, as though it really did."

And Polly could no longer hold back her own tears, and they came trickling down.

Bob Chicklaid slewed round a bit on his chair, so that his back was to his daughter and his face to the fire.

"Cry—ahem! crying won't help it, Polly," he presently remarked huskily. "It is as bad as that, I suppose? I mean as regards the prospect."

"Well, you see father, it is easily counted up. There is the seven shillings I shall take to-morrow, and little Phil's two make nine, and one week's rent is promised, and *must* be paid. That leaves only four to go on with next week."

"If it wasn't for that confounded rent, now," Bob remarked musingly.

"Oh! that must be paid, father, you know

what the collector threatened last week, and what will happen if it isn't paid; why, it would kill poor mother outright."

"So will t'other, for all I know," returned the poor little cork cutter, with almost a groan. "The doctor just upon hinted as much: 'may have a very serious effect on her,' were his words. Dash it all! I never felt more tempted to do something desperate."

Saying which, with a frown of grim determination, he put his last morsel of tobacco into his pipe, and puffed away at it as fiercely as though the 'something desperate' he felt tempted to do was highway robbery, at the very least. And while he thus sat, darkly cogitating, in came Bill, whose shabby jacket had occasioned his ignominious dismissal from the genteel linendraper's.

Bill was whistling. He had had the good luck to earn threepence, and he knew how welcome at home even that sum would be. "He had," he said, "carried home a basket of linen for Mrs.

Ripley, the laundress, whose son Jack had sprained his ankle."

"And she is going to give me another threepence," said Bill, "if I will go with her to-morrow evening and bring home her Christmas marketing, and twopence more and my dinner on Christmas Day if I will take the beef to the bakehouse and fetch it home again."

On the instant, up rose Bob Chicklaid, with the eager mien of a man inspired with an idea of unprecedented brilliancy. Before communicating its nature, however, he carefully closed the parlour door. It was necessary, however, in the first place, to make a confidant of Bill, and make him understand the exact position of affairs as to his mother's brooding anxiety on account of their prospect of no Christmas dinner for

the family in general, as well as to what the doctor had said on the subject.

"But I think that I now see my way out of the difficulty!" said the little cork cutter, with a beaming countenance, and rubbing his hands the while.

"You see your way to getting us all some dinner, father?" asked Mary amazedly.

"Well, no, my dear, my idea is not quite so promising as that, but it is next door to it. I think, if Bill works the matter cleverly, we can *pretend* that we are all going to dine in regular good style, and that will be just as good."

Polly looked puzzled, and as though she hardly thought so.



MARY WENT UP TO HER SICK MOTHER'S ROOM.

"I mean, of course, as far as concerns your poor mother," and her father hastened to explain; "as for me and you, Polly, it won't break our hearts to go without, and we will manage to get a little bit of something for young Phil; and as for Bill, here, he is provided for, but he has got to do something more for his beef and pud-

ding than to bring home the market basket for Mrs. Ripley and fetch home the baking."

"That is all she expects of me, father."

"Aye, aye, my boy; but there is something else will have to be done, or my brilliant idea isn't worth a brass farden. Artfulness and deception are not in your father's line, as you very well know, but we mustn't mind stretching a point just a little, when your mother's precious health—p'raps, her very life—is concerned. What is the reason, Bill, that Mrs. Ripley wants you to bring home her market basket?"

"Because, when she has finished marketing, she wishes to go on and get the amount of a bill, from a customer that lives at Camberwell."

"Why! that's better still," and Bob Chicklaid snapped his finger and thumb

delightedly. "Then, Bill, there will be nothing to you bringing the basket of provisions here, and nobody the wiser!"

Polly stared at Bill, and then they both stared at him, with such astonishment in their eyes, that Bob Chicklaid burst out laughing.

"Why, you can't suppose I meant bring it here and keep it here! No, no, I only want your mother to see it."

"But what good will that do, father?" his daughter Polly asked.

"All the good, my dear. Just listen, now. The idea is, since mother takes it so much to heart, that for the very first time, after all these years, we shall have no dinner on Christmas Day, to make her believe we have got one. Being on gruel and bread-and-milk herself, she won't want any. Well, it is to be worked this way: Bill, he brings in Mrs. Ripley's basket, and I take it upstairs to her. 'Look here mother,' says I, 'I've got a pleasant surprise for you, I've been doing an odd job or two, that I havn't said anything about, and this is the result of it. So, cheer up, we shall have some Christmas dinner after all.' Then I bring the basket downstairs again, and Bill carries it on to Ripley's."

"But what about the cooking father? mother will be sure to——"

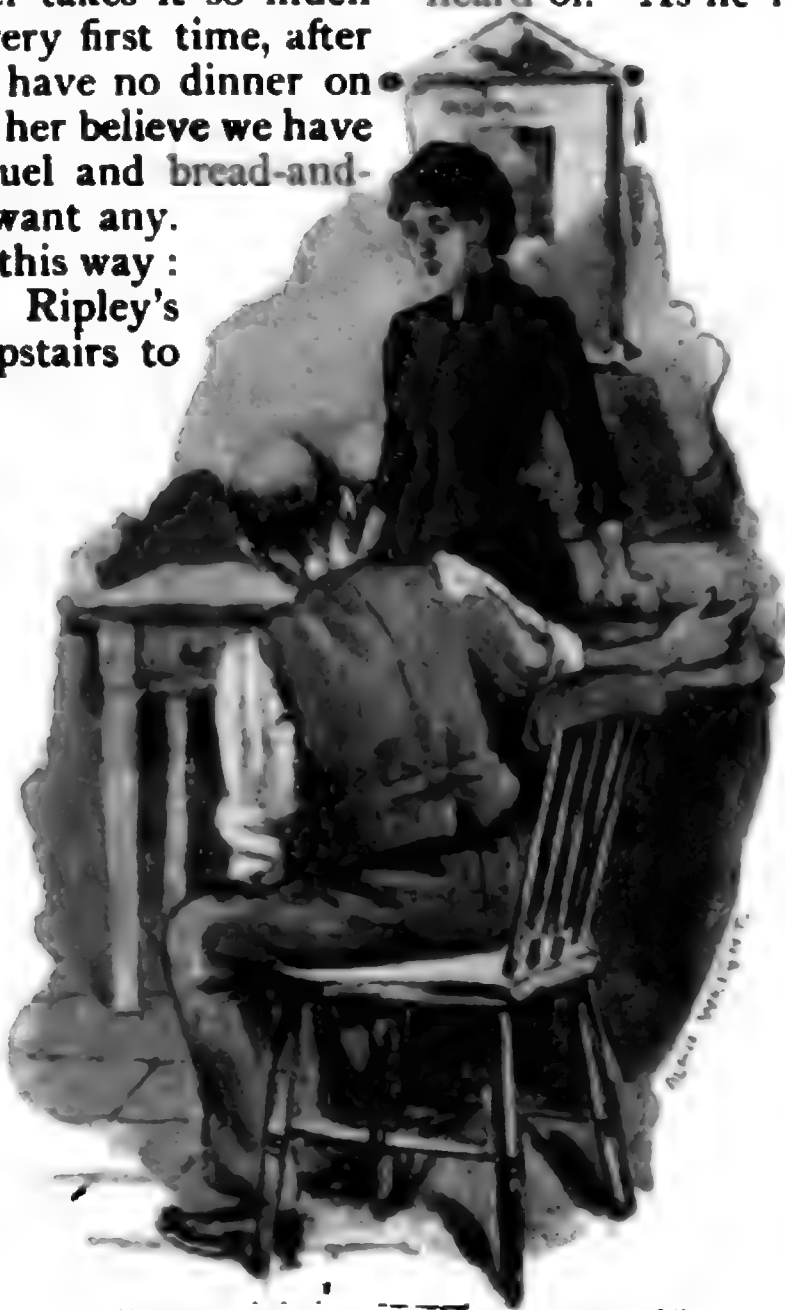
"Hold hard! That's where that other job that Bill has got to do for Mrs. Ripley fits in. He carries the beef and potatoes to the baker's on Christmas Day, and he fetches 'em back, all piping hot, at one o'clock. But he makes a call on his way, and the Ripley's, living round the corner, need never be aware of it. He brings in the beef in the baking dish, and I deal with that, just the same as I did with the market basket. I take it up to your mother, to show her how nicely it is done, and bring it down again, and Bill, he whips off with it to them it belongs to, and we shut the parlour door, and I'll lay a wager that the little joke will give a flavour to our bread-and-cheese almost equal to roast goose."

Polly cheerfully promised to play her

part in the pious fraud, though she may have had some misgivings as to how the fictitious flavour to be imparted to the bread and cheese would operate with her young brother Phil, who, though small in stature, was possessed of a healthy appetite. Possibly he might not take kindly to the piping hot baking dish being brought on to the premises just at Christmas dinner time, to be seen and sniffed, and then to vanish. As for Bill, he was almost as enthusiastic as his father, and declared it was one of the jolliest games he had ever heard of. As he himself was to dine with

the Ripley's, Bill could afford to give the scheme his unqualified approval.

And so, Christmas Eve came, and if the conspirators, or any one of them, had felt disposed to waver as the hour approached when the ticklish plot was to be acted on, they were kept well up to the mark by the circumstance that poor Mrs. Chicklaid now grew hourly more despondent and low-spirited. Just for form's sake, her husband, more than once, enquired what it was that bowed her down so, but her only answer, when she had kissed him, and told him not to worry about her, was, that she felt rather dull, that was all, she would be better to-morrow, or next



"WHAT GOOD WILL THAT DO, FATHER?"

day, at all events.

"I hope," the kind-hearted little cork cutter sadly said to himself, as he came down stairs after one of these dismal interviews, "I hope there isn't a hidden meaning in them words of hers—'better the day after to-morrow!' If she keeps on running down at the rate she is going at it now, she'll have stopped altogether by that time. It is a'most time Bill turned up with the market basket," and it being by this time the dusk of evening, he went and watched at the parlour window, his fears and anxiety momentarily increasing lest some trifling occurrence should, after all,

upset the arrangement, and Bill and the basket failed him.

But it was all right, within the next half-hour—by which time Polly had come home—there was Bill with his load. He slipped in at the street door as though he had stolen it, and they guiltily carried it into the parlour and shut the door, so that Bob might qualify himself for affecting a *bond fide* purchaser's knowledge of the basket's contents. There were six pounds of thick flank of beef, and a dozen pounds of potatoes, with plenty of green-stuff, and half-a-quarter of flour, and some suet, and a parcel of plums and currants, and spice, and four eggs.

"Come on, and let's get it over," remarked Bob desperately.

"You will back me up, of course, Polly."

And in this, the first stage of the imposture, Bob Chicklaid was successful even beyond his expectations. Polly, bearing the beef and groceries, and her father, the remainder of the materials for the feast, managed to creep into the room where Mrs. Chicklaid was dozing, and she opened her eyes to find them thus bountifully laden at her bedside. And while she sat upright, with her thin hands clasped in amazement, Bob delivered himself of the mendacious explanation he had rehearsed so many times since yesterday that he had it as pat as a boy has his Guy Faux speech. He knew how anxious she would be about it, and having had the luck to earn a few shillings, he thought he would say nothing about it till the time came for spending them, so that it might be a pleasant surprise for her. It was in Bob's favour that he was in general the most truthful of husbands, and poor Mrs. Chicklaid implicitly believed every word he gave utterance to.

"It is very, very kind of you, Bob, dear," said the poor soul as she hugged him, to the best of her feeble ability. "But, oh! I do wish you had told me before. If you only knew the load of bitterness it has been for me to bear! But how could you tell? How could you even guess? God bless you all the same, you dear, thoughtful old chap."



"JUST THE SLICE OF BROWN."

She brisked up, and her spirits improved from that moment. She praised the beef, and counselled Polly to make just a plain pudding at one side of the divided baking dish, with potatoes at the other, and advised her as to how long the plum pudding should be boiled.

"Though it isn't in the least likely, my dear," remarked the sick woman, "that I shall be able to taste it, when it is done."

Bob cast a scared glance at his daughter.

Good gracious! Suppose she took it into her head that she would like to taste it. But it was no use taking fright at any possibility of the sort, as Bob remarked when the preliminary ordeal was over, and they came down stairs; they had launched the boat now, and must risk the voyage.

And, as it was, with a cloudless sky and a favouring breeze, it seemed that all would go well. The half-timer, Phil, was let into the secret by his sister, and like a staunch young Briton, permitted himself to be enlisted as a conspirator without a murmur. Next day Bill carried the Ripleys' baking dish to the baker's, and Polly, to give countenance to the imposture, lit the copper fire, and kept the lid of the copper off, to give a steaminess to the atmosphere suggestive of pudding boiling, and made a clatter with the plates, and actually went the length of asking young Phil, loud enough for her mother to hear, to run and buy a ha'porth of mustard.

Then came Bill with the baking-dish, which was straightway carried up-stairs by his father, so that his wife might see how beautifully the beef and potatoes were cooked.

Hooray! it was all right now. Bill had taken his departure, and, the three were doing ample justice to the humble meal of bread and cheese, when they heard the sound of a stick tapping the floor above, by which token it was known that mother required something. Artfully undoing the bottom button of his waistcoat, to indicate how heavily he had been going in for the fat and the lean, and the "Yorkshire," Bob himself hurried up to see what was wanted.

"We are done for now!" he ejaculated in a tragic whisper, when he re-appeared. "It's all over with us. No, no! don't go up; you can't do any good—nobody can."

"But father! if dear mother is so bad——"

"Bad, no"—he interrupted—"better; a great deal better, I am happy to say—no, I am sorry,—oh, Lord forgive me for saying such a thing. I am going off my head, I believe. What d'ye think, Polly? She wants the least bit of beef—your mother does—cut brown, and just a taste of Yorkshire-pudding with plenty of gravy."

"Gracious goodness! and what did you tell her, father?"

"What *could* I tell her? I didn't have breath to tell her anything for a few moments; then I said, 'certainly, my dear, we will put a bit of both to the fire for a few minutes, to make it nice and hot, and then you shall have it.' Of course she won't have it—she can't. Dash it all! I had better have stood my chance of being reproached for greediness, and said that we had eat it all up."

Then, seizing his hat, he was out of the house before they could ask him where he was going to.

In terrible anguish of mind—for the canal bridge was no great distance off—Polly hastened to the street door, which her father had left open, but he was already out of sight; and while she was hurrying on her hat to follow him, there were footsteps in the passage. It was her father returned, bringing Bill with him. Goggle-eyed with consternation was Bill, and in his hands he bore a dinner-plate, tied up in a pocket handkerchief.

The amazed lad entering the parlour, looked about him. "I never knowed," he exclaimed, "that we had an uncle in Halifax. Where is he?"

"All right, Bill, my boy; that was a fiction, that was. Give it here!" And with trembling fingers his father seized the plate out of Bill's hands and commenced to untie the wrapping. Then his face became perfectly radiant with delight, and he chuckled gleefully.

"Here's luck! Just exactly the slice of brown I should have cut off, if I had the whole joint to carve from, and exactly the size and shape of the bit of Yorkshire. Pop on the frying pan, Polly, and we'll have 'em heated up in a jiffy. Warn't it fortunate, Bill, that you had only just sat down?"

Bill looked dubious as to that. "He must have been in a precious hurry to leave Halifax, and come and see us, not to think of getting his dinner before he started," he remarked ruefully; "where is he?"

"Where is who?" his father asked, looking round from the frying pan.

"Why, the sudden-arrived uncle you are warming up my dinner for?"

"Oh! Ha, ha! I thought of that as I was running round to Ripley's; it wasn't bad, was it, Polly? There they were sitting down, and Bill with what I should judge to be his first mouthful. 'You must excuse me, Mrs. Ripley,' I says, 'but I am in a mighty hurry, there's an uncle of ours, from Halifax, just arrived at our place, and he wants to see our Bill instantly. Don't stay to finish your dinner, Bill. Bring it along with you, if Mrs. Ripley will be so agreeable as to let you.' And she did let him. I ain't saying that the cleverness of a crammer is any excuse for it, Bob added more seriously, though I hope that being hard drove, as I was, takes the edge off the sin."

And then they made Bill acquainted with the peculiar particulars of the case, and, there being enough remaining in the plate for a tolerably satisfying meal, he was restored to good humour.

And was it a mere whim, on poor ailing Mrs. Chicklaid's part, or had peace of mind so miraculously brought back her appetite that she really required what she had asked for?

There could be no doubt about it, since she ate up every morsel. But what was still more satisfactory, she began to mend from that time, and never left off mending, until the doctor said there was no occasion for him to call any more.

And from that day to this, as far as I am aware, the romance of the Ripley baking remains a family secret.



R. Henry Irving recently remarked, when addressing the members of the Philomathic Society of Liverpool, that in putting the play of *Henry VIII.* on the stage, he was "not so anxious about its authorship, as about getting in

the production fidelity of detail, harmony of colour, and the whole catalogue of resources demanded by the refinement of the age." This admission clearly indicates the spirit actuating the modern stage manager, be he about to produce a classical tragedy, or a comedy of manners, or a Christmas pantomime. No longer does the inscription "this is a street" suffice to illustrate a scene of Shakespeare; the "refinement of the age" demands as much thought and labour from the painter and the carpenter, from the decorator and the dressmaker, as from the actor whose duty it is to deliver the text. As a consequence, the production of a stage play has become a costly affair; but, lavish as may be the expenditure of energy and money on the public representation of a drama, an up-to-date pantomime entails a far larger outlay. A single scene in a pantomime will often cost as much as a whole play.

Take the palace scene in the Crystal Palace pantomime of *The Forty Thieves* this year, for instance. The dresses alone will represent thousands of pounds; some of the materials costing forty-six shillings a yard. I have paid as much as seventy-five shillings a yard for material cut up for pantomime dresses; several of the silks this year have been specially made at Lyons, and I have had to get materials dyed in particular shades of blue, in order to obtain the exact effect in colour of certain Persian pottery. No detail is too insignificant now-a-days; and the public have little idea of the thought and research devoted, in order to be accurate.

There was a time when pantomimes used to be pitched on the stage anyhow; but all that is now altered, at least, at the Crystal Palace, where, I think even Mr. Irving will agree, that the Christmas productions during recent years have been distinguished not only by that "fidelity of detail, harmony of colour, and the whole catalogue of resources demanded by the refinement of the age" on which he sets such store, but also by an intelligent form of representation



MR. LENNARD

which has not been aimed at on any other stage. At the Crystal Palace, justice is done to "the book"; the author's lines are spoken on the final performance as faithfully as they are at the first, and the music is treated with as much conscientious care as a Grand Opera. The entertainment is not a variety show; it is a pantomime.

My experience of pantomime dates from the year 1866, when I was concerned in the production of a Christmas piece entitled *Pappillonnetta* at the Theatre Royal, Southampton. In 1867 and 1868 I was responsible for the music of the pantomimes at the New Tyne Theatre, Newcastle. In 1869, I did two pantomimes, *The Queen Bee*

at the Theatre Royal, Liverpool, and *Mother Hubbard* at the Prince of Wales's, Glasgow. In the following year I came to London, and have been associated with the pantomimes of some London theatre or other, every Christmas since, often doing two and sometimes three a year. I had the sole musical direction at Drury Lane when *Robinson Crusoe*, *Sindbad*, *Cinderella*, *Dick Whittington*, and *Aladdin*, were produced; *The Forty Thieves* will be my nineteenth Crystal Palace pantomime, and my forty-second in all. So I may fairly claim to know a little about pantomimes, past and present. No

form of theatrical entertainment has undergone such change during recent years as that which is peculiar to the period of Christmas, and which continues to be called "pantomime," although words now-a-days are considered a necessary supplement to actions. Occasionally we hear outcries for the revival of "old-fashioned" pantomime, but I fear that the old-fashioned pantomime popularized by Rich and Grimaldi would hardly meet with the approval of the rising generation. In their days the "pantomime opening" was a matter of minor moment; the harlequinade that followed was "the thing." Even during my recollection, dramas have been played at Drury Lane and Covent Garden before the pantomime. Now the "opening" is so long that the harlequinade

is sometimes dispensed with. The famous Payne family, of whom Mr. Harry Payne, the clown, is now the sole survivor, were the last representatives of old-fashioned pantomimes, Mr. Payne could, no doubt, tell many funny stories of past pantomimes in which he played with his father and brother parts in the fairy openings, until the time came for the "transformation scene" when they were "transformed" into clown, pantaloon, harlequin, etc., and the revels of the night began.

But, as a rule, when the "finale" is reached, and the "tag" spoken, the pantomime is considered over, and you see the audience stream out of the stalls at any rate. Although no attempt is now made to tell a story in the harlequinade (and it used to have a story, while the "animations" of the harlequin were indicated by touching a particular colour in his dress, the red for "love," yellow for "jealousy," black for "hate," and so on), we still give the clown a good innings at the Crystal Palace. Children will roar with delight at his pranks, and will scream with joy at the red poker, so long as children are born. It is on account of the children that well-worn stories are usually chosen as the motive of a Christmas piece.

Mr. George Conquest with whom I was associated

in all his great successes at the old Grecian Theatre, often treated new and original stories and out-of-the-way subjects, such as *Zig-Zag*; *The Wood Demon*; *Spitz-Spitz*; *Hic-Hac-Hoc*, &c., but this was done to give greater scope for the display of his wonderful pantomimic and acrobatic powers. I find the good old nursery tales are the most attractive at the Crystal Palace. Cinderella is the heroine of the girls, and Dick Whittington the hero of the boys, and the children will clamour to be brought to see their favourites on the stage; and you may be sure, that, so far as pantomime is concerned, that which gives most pleasure to the youngsters will find most favour with children of a larger growth.

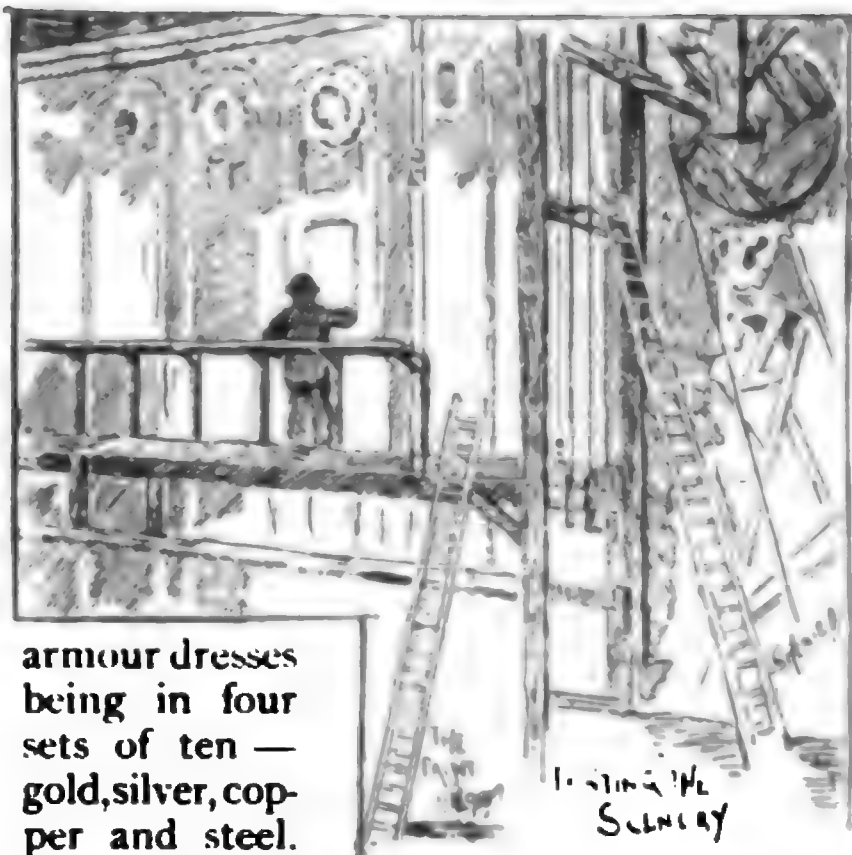
The selection of a subject is always the



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first consideration, and before anything can be done, this must be decided. It is always well to get a contrast to the previous year. It would not be advisable to follow *Dick Whittington* with *Jack in the Beanstalk*, on account of the old English character of each. In the same way, *Sindbad the Sailor* should not follow *Aladdin* or any other oriental subject. This being decided, the work begins; and only those who have been behind the scenes can have any idea of the amount of labour that a pantomime entails. Early in the spring I give the scenic artist an idea of what I shall want from him, and he makes a model of each scene, carefully arranging for all practical doors, windows, platforms, traps, &c., necessary for the action of the story. Cloths are prepared, the stage carpenter takes the model, and constructs all the flats and profile pieces necessary, and when these are approved, the scenic artist can start painting. The dresses are the next consideration, as there are hundreds to prepare. We have first to deal with the "masses," and I have to decide what characters my ballet, chorus, and supernumeraries shall represent. Then I confer with Mr. Wilhelm who has designed all the dresses for Crystal Palace pantomimes and out-door ballets during recent years. I regard him *facile princeps* as a designer of stage dresses. He is very quick at grasping an idea, and, possessing a technical knowledge as well as a remarkable control of colour, he gets effects where others fail. Every

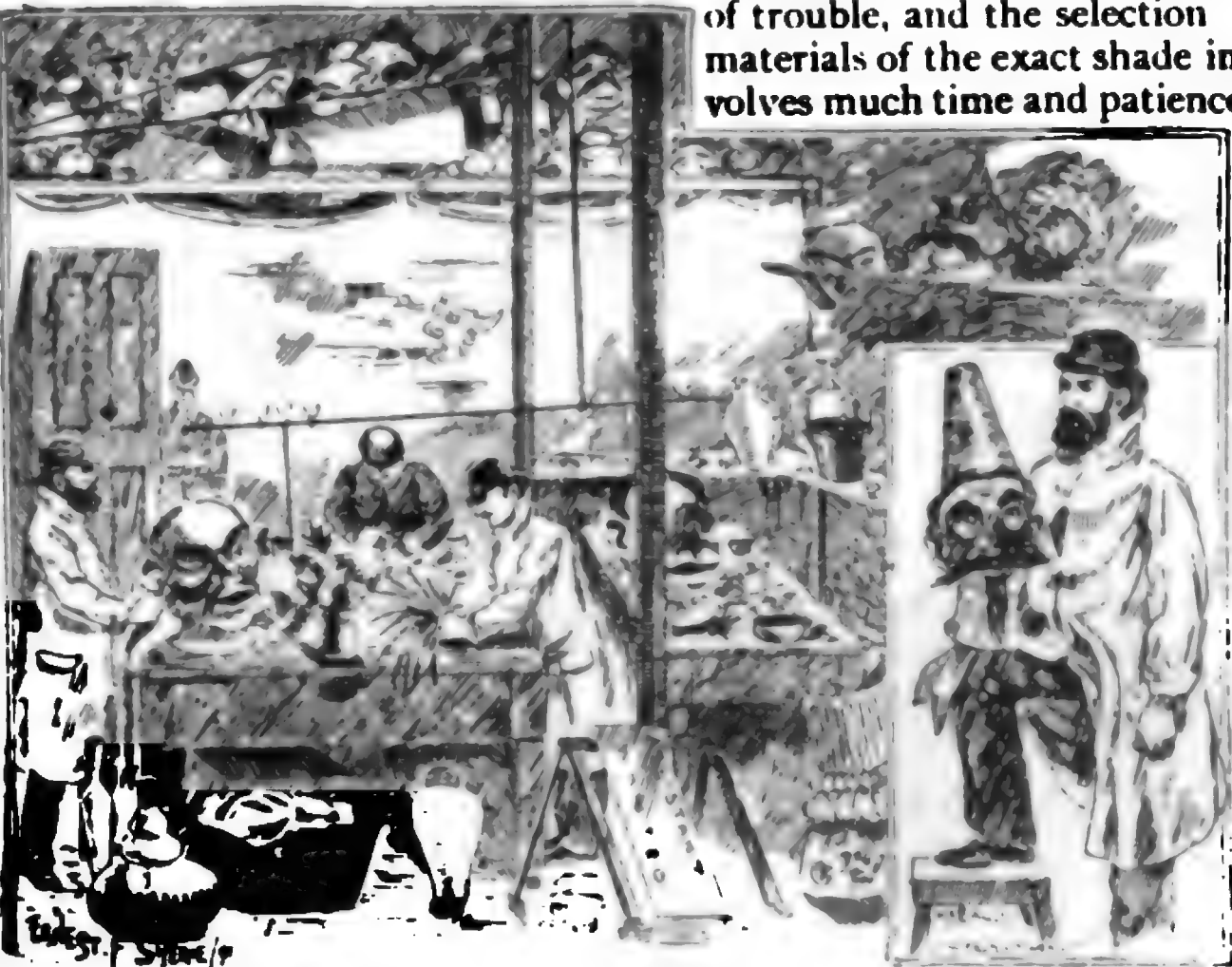
combination has to be thought of; where reds meet blues, and greens meet yellows. We have to strive for harmony as well as contrast. There must be no clashing, no striking colours "swearing at one another," as I have heard a lady very graphically describe it. In such a pantomime as I am producing this year, there was a good foundation for the dress designer to start on in the several sets of dresses for "the forty." They have three changes of dresses — the



armour dresses being in four sets of ten — gold, silver, copper and steel.

Mr. Wilhelm makes his sketches in water colour: separate sketches have to be made of certain portions of the dresses that have to be specially made such as metal head-dresses, belts, &c. There are sketches, too, of trimmings, which are manufactured expressly. Every detail of every dress is made to design. Nothing is haphazard, everything is thought out beforehand and has its meaning; even a distinct character is given to the dresses worn by the supers. There are, of course, the principal's dresses to be thought of. Mr. Wilhelm, in designing these, had to adapt himself to the proportions and peculiarities of the players.

The details of some of these dresses give a lot of trouble, and the selection of materials of the exact shade involves much time and patience.



THE PROPERTY ROOM AT THE CRYSTAL PALACE

Before the dress designer can proceed far, the ballets must be thought out. Early in the summer, I had Mr. Wilhelm's sketches for some of the ballet dresses, but all are not finished before the end of November. I may here remark on the change that has taken place in ballet dresses during recent years; flowing draperies, novel in design, and delicate in hue, have almost entirely superseded the old fashioned tarlatan ballet skirts. I think the style of dress I adopted for the open-air ballets at the Crystal Palace ("A Midsummer Night's Dream," "Sculptor's Vision," &c.) tended to this artistic reform. It is not always easy to work out a ballet that will fit the general scheme of the pantomime. I do not believe in dragging in a ballet without rhyme or reason, any more than I believe in stopping the dramatic action of the piece for the introduction of the "Man Fish," or "The Intelligent Elephant," but it is not always possible to get an idea like the "Willow Pattern Plate Ballet," which is so appropriate to *Aladdin*, or the "Autumn Leaves Ballet," which made such a hit in the Crystal Palace version of *Cinderella*. The "motive" of the latter occurred to me some time before I used it, and the subject was suggested to me one October day, when, walking in the Isle of Wight, through the woods round Carisbrook. I was struck with the glorious harmony of the autumn tints, the browns and yellows, and greens; then came the suggestion of the autumn fruits and berries; then the thought of pheasants, and the fox-hunt followed. Why! It was the very thing for the hunting scene in *Cinderella*, and I kept it in my mind until the opportunity of using

it presented itself. Having settled the subject of the ballets, and arranged for the dresses, I begin to think of the music.

This, when complete, I give to Madame Katti Lanner, with a full explanation of the "situation" in which the ballets take place, and leave her to arrange the dances. When we come to rehearsal, everything is cut and dried and ready to fall into its place. It is time now to think about "the book," and, as I have already said, we pay more attention to the book at the Crystal Palace than is often the case. Mr. Horace Lennard is writing the book this year. It is the seventh pantomime he has written for me, and the twelfth in which we have collaborated, so it is needless to say that we get on well together. Mr. Lennard works more on the lines of Planché and E. L. Blanchard, than on those of the modern burlesque writer. He does not strive for puns but for pointed rhythmical lines that will act and sing well. He is a great stickler for avoiding cockney rhymes, and when we are getting our songs into shape we have many a discussion over assonance and often an amusing tussle with spondees and iambics. But we have fallen into one another's methods and no collaborators could work in more harmony. I send him a general outline of what I want, and the effects I wish to produce, with a list of the performers already engaged, and the parts I propose they shall play.

This plan he elaborates before he begins to write, and we go through this together, very carefully making improvements and striking out all unnecessary matter. A number of important details have to be observed. Sufficient time must be allowed at

the right place for principals, chorus, ballet, etc., to change dresses; the "business" of the parts has to be equitably distributed, and opportunities given for making as much as possible of the singing and dancing abilities of the various artists. When concerted music has to be sung, we must see that the necessary voices are on the stage, and so on. All these points being settled, Mr. Lennard begins to put the dialogue into rhymed couplets. When this is done, we tackle the choruses and songs. This is sometimes a serious business,



MAKING THE DRESSES AT THE CRYSTAL PALACE.

and we have often spent hours together, trying to get the right melody to exactly fit a certain situation, I at the piano, he listening, pen in hand. At other times, we work very rapidly. The melody found, he, as a rule, writes the words there and then, and so we go on through choruses, solo songs, duets, and concerted numbers, till all is completed. Every detail of the business proposed to be done on the stage is noted down at the time, and marked on the conductor's copy, so that when rehearsals commence, I have before me, in black and white, the results of our forethought and deliberation. So far as the words and songs are concerned, the pantomime has been practically rehearsed before any of the principals see their parts. I know how long each scene should play, and have a distinct idea of the effects I wish to produce.

Then the principals, choristers, male and female, and ballet ladies, have to be engaged. I make a point of trying all voices before entering on an engagement; the dressers, cleaners, supernumeraries, and a whole list of extra helpers have to be selected. The wigs and the shoes have to be arranged for. Many of the characters require special wigs, and these have to be of a shade to match the dresses. All the shoes have to be specially made and tried on. The public little think of the time and trouble that is here involved.

I have been forgetting a very important item, that of the "properties," as all the big masks and everything that is carried on to the stage is called. The property master is an important personage in a pantomime. It is he that makes the mechanical animals, some of which cost more than the live

article, and he is responsible for the smiles in the big faces of the country bumpkins. There is yet another item that must not be overlooked before we can begin rehearsals, and that is, copying the music. After the composing and scoring is done, the band parts have to be copied, and for a large orchestra, such as there is at the Crystal Palace, this is no slight matter. The vocal

parts, too, have to be got out for principals and chorus. At last the time comes for drawing all the threads together for taking all the component parts, and fitting them into their proper places. At first the chorus ladies and gentlemen are called and taken carefully through all the vocal numbers,

each one being supplied with a copy of the music, on which is written, not only the words that have to be sung, but the action that is to accompany the words. All this has to be carefully taught. Then the principals come upon the scene, and day by day, hour by hour, we work away getting everything in to order. A stage rehearsal has been often described, so there is no need for me to go into details; but I may be allowed to say that I know of no labour on earth that is so calculated to tax a man's health and patience as a

series of pantomime rehearsals. The scenery has to be rehearsed as well as the performances, and there must also be separate rehearsals for lights and traps. The gas lights have to be lowered at certain signals, lime-lights have to be changed at the right moment, or everything would be chaos. We should have red lights on the wintry landscape, and blue lights indicating sunshine. The men who work





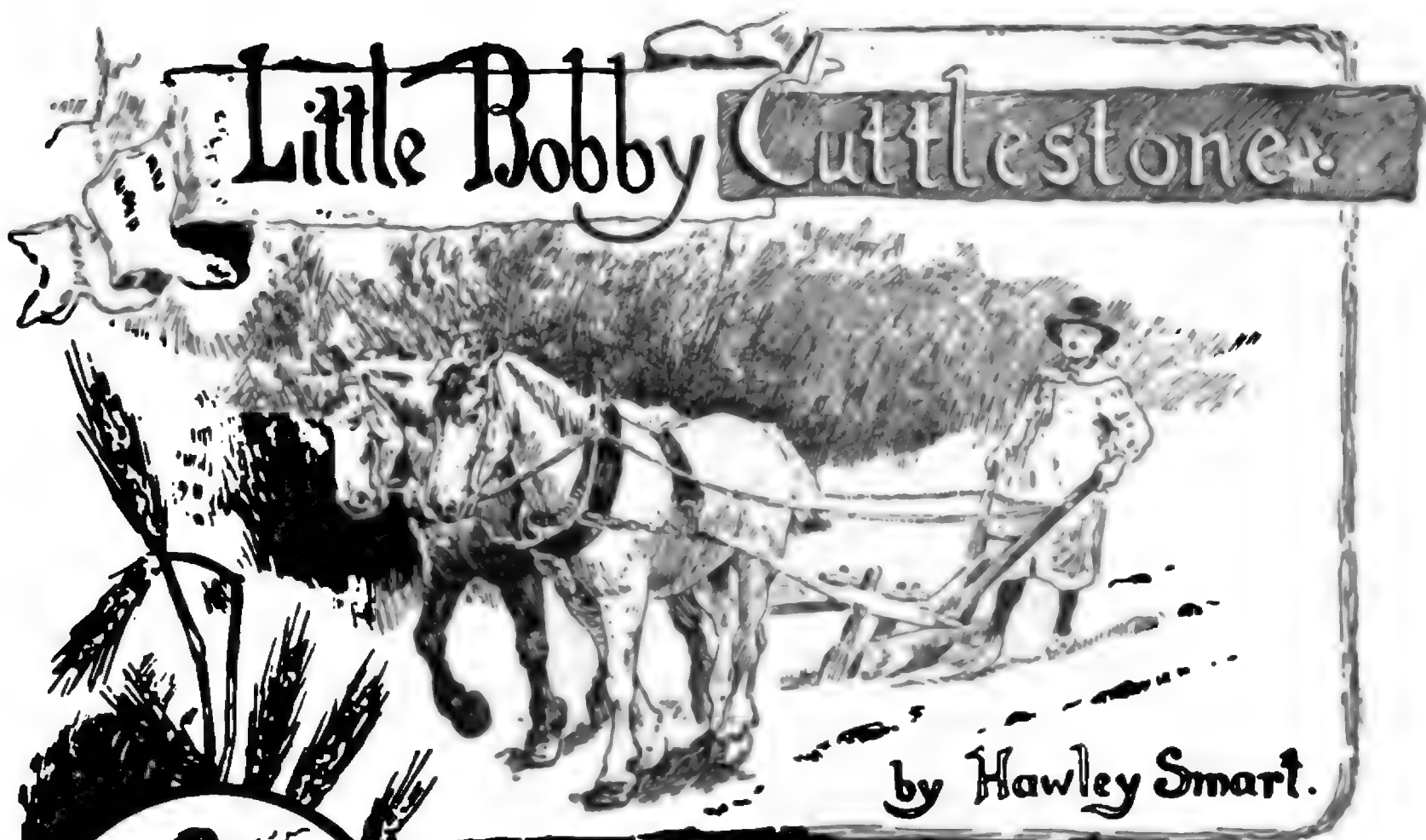
A SKETCH FROM BEHIND THE STAGE DURING A PANTOMIME REHEARSAL.

the lights are up in the flies and are supplied with what is called a "plot," whereon it is indicated, that the sound of one bell or two bells or the waving of a flag at a certain point, mean the lowering on or the turning off of a particular light. The scenes are changed by similar signals, and the traps in the stage are opened and closed by the same means. It will be seen, therefore, how necessary it is that everything should be carefully rehearsed, for mistakes would often be fatal. Then there is the transformation scene; while the comic scenes have also to

be arranged and rehearsed.

I am sure that even now I have overlooked several points that claim attention, such as the separate band rehearsals; arranging of the marches and processions; fitting the ballets in their places; the trying on of the dresses; the final dress rehearsal; passing of the book for press; preparing the illustrations for the book of words, and drawing up the programme. But I think I have said enough to give some idea of the elaborate preparations that a pantomime entails.





UNLESS coming back to an assured welcome from one's own relations, it is a question, I think, whether re-visiting the scenes of our boyhood is not usually a disappointment. Either our bosom friends and associates are dispersed, or, even if left, have formed other ties, to say nothing of having undergone that change in disposition which takes place with all of us between youth and middle age. However, no such thoughts as these obtruded themselves on the mind of Jack Pinkney, as the Great Northern whirled him down to Slatterly, the village where he had been born. Twenty years and more had passed since Jack, turning his back on Slatterly, had crossed the seas, and sought his fortune in the Canadas. He had no recollection of his parents, who had died when he was quite young, and the uncle and aunt who had brought him up were, as far as he knew, the sole relatives he possessed. They were both dead now, and had bequeathed to him the cottage in which they had lived, and the thirty or forty acres of land attached to it; and it was chiefly to look after this small inheritance that Jack was re-visiting the scenes of his boyhood. He was looking forward, not a little, to seeing some of his old chums, notably

"Stunning" Joe Bainbridge, the idol of his youth, the cock of Slatterly school, and the leader in all the mischief and scrapes of those days. He pictured him a big, burly, prosperous farmer, and if he could count upon a welcome in Slatterly town, surely it would be from "the Old Stunner." Little Bobby Cuttlestone, too, he wondered what had become of him, poor little chap; how Joe used to bully him, to be sure. It was rather hard on him, and here Jack couldn't help laughing at the recollection of how Joe used to insist on Bobby's joining in all their pranks, which he did with the greatest reluctance, and with his heart in his mouth. Whatever the misdemeanour might be, it was always Bobby who was detected; others might escape, but Bobby never. When he fought, and to do Bobby justice it was as a rule very unwillingly, he was always licked. A good tempered, nervous, under-sized boy, he seemed pre-ordained, as some unfortunates are, to go through this world as its butt; and Jack wondered much what had become of him, until at length he was roused from his reverie by the arrival of the train at Slatterly station.

Although, to the eyes of ordinary observers, Slatterly appeared a village, it was known, by the inhabitants of those parts, as a town, and the natives could give excellent reasons for so speaking of it, for Slatterly boasted of a market, which was held once a week on the village green. It is true that the market usually consisted of only

a few pens of sheep and a small show of poultry, but Slatterly was the last town on the edge of the Fens. In days gone by, when the well-drained, grand, wheat-growing country of the present had been all open marsh, into which all the dwellers on its borders turned their live stock, the Slatterly weekly market had been a very much more important affair than it was now. In those days the sheep and cattle were left to shift for themselves during the summer,

and the Fenmen brought them into Slatterly for sale as they got fat enough. Slatterly, moreover, boasted a really very fine, old, though dilapidated, church; a church that would have made those of much bigger places dwindle into insignificance, and further, not half a mile from the town, stood Slatterly Castle, which, seen at a distance, looked an old residence in excellent condition, but which, when

approached, turned out to be only the ruined keep of one of those great feudal fortresses, from which, before the days of Henry VIII., the Church and barons of England domineered over the country. Slatterly town, in those days, had been, doubtless, beneath the thrall of the lord of Slatterly Castle. On the whole, Slatterly might be described as a rather pretty village, on the verge of a hideous country.

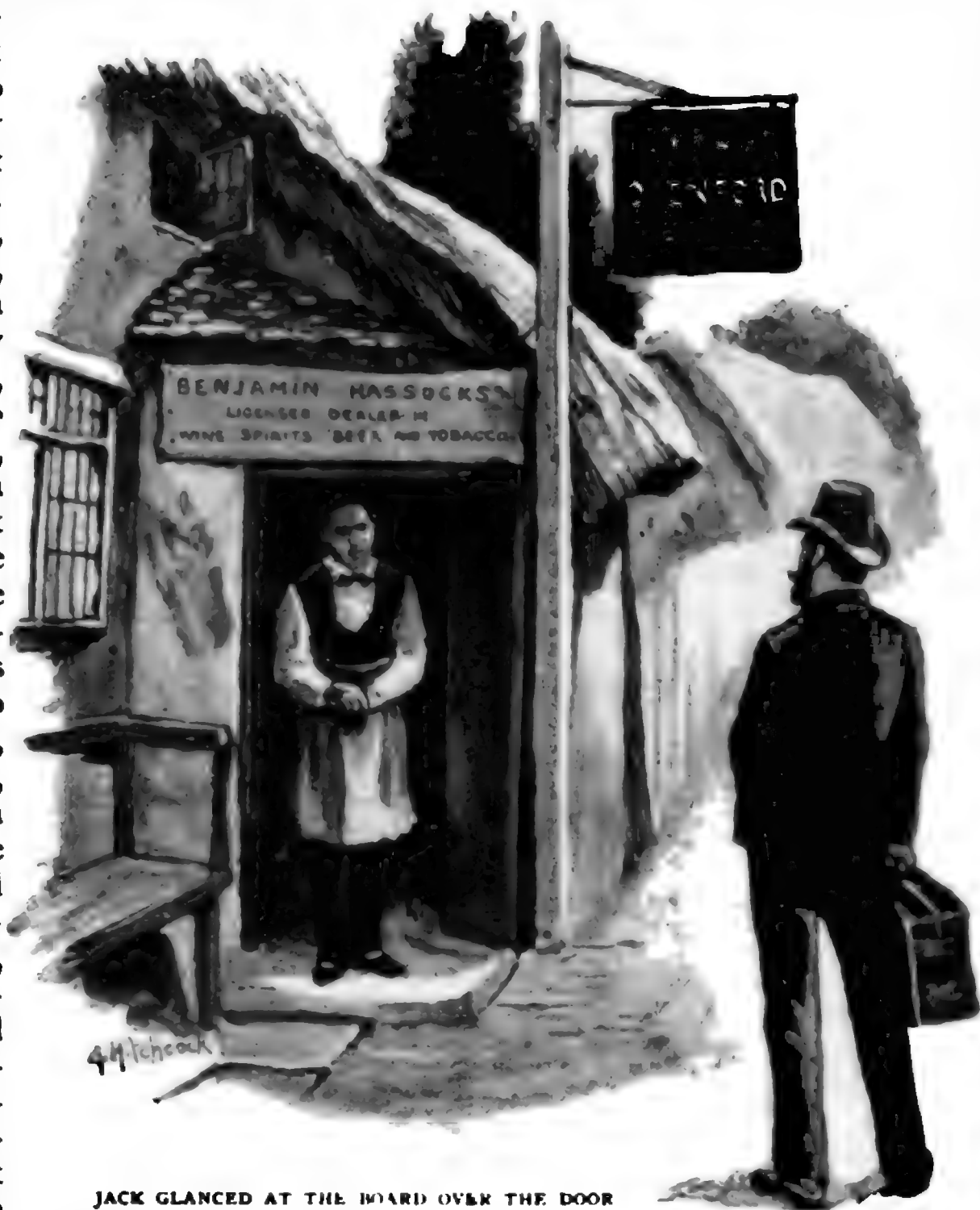
Having alighted, and got hold of his portmanteau, Jack prepared to walk up to the "Oxenford Arms," as the only inn that Slatterly possessed was entitled, a low, old-

fashioned, thatched house, of no great size, and of somewhat limited accommodation.

Jack glanced up at the board over the door as he entered, and saw that Benjamin Hassocks was licensed to provide entertainment for man and beast. Hassocks; the name was new to him. Hassocks had not been the name of the proprietor in his time, and yet he had a dim recollection of there being people of that name living in the village, although he had known but little

about them. Well, whoever he might be, the landlord of the "Oxenford Arms" would be sure to know all about everybody in the parish, and especially about such a prominent man as Joe Bainbridge probably was now. Although Jack, in the early days of his exile, had led a rough and rather shifty life, he had always managed to keep up a desultory correspondence with his uncle and aunt, and so had

heard something as to how his old school-mates prospered at the commencement of their career; but, with the death of his relations, all correspondence with Slatterly ceased, and it was years now since he had had any news from there. He had been so busy with his own battle with the world that he had never even had time to think about how things were going on in Slatterly. When the news of his aunt's death reached him—for she had outlived her husband, and it was upon her decease that the lawyers wrote to apprise him of his little inheritance—his first impulse had been to



JACK GLANCED AT THE BOARD OVER THE DOOR

turn it at once into money. He wanted capital badly to extend his business; but no, second thoughts prevailed, and though Jack Pinkney had about as much sentiment as an oyster, he had a queer sort of reverence for the cottage in which he had been brought up, and for the old people who were the only father and mother he had ever known. He resolved to keep it, and though he had been sorely pressed for money upon more than one occasion, yet he had held on to the cottage and the few acres of land attached to it. Now, after a hard fight, he had, as our cousins say, made "his pile," not a very big one, but still, enough to make him comfortably independent for life, and his visit to England was as much to determine whether he should settle for good in that country or in Canada.

None of the few people he had so far met had recognized him, nor was it likely that even those who had known him well would recognise the stripling who had left Slatterly some twenty years ago in the stalwart, bearded man Jack Pinkney was at present. In the meantime, having finished his dinner, he thought he would have a talk with the landlord, and pick up as much Slatterly gossip as he could manage. He accordingly told the waiter to give his

compliments to Mr. Hassocks, and would he bring him a bottle of his best port and help him to drink it. Mr. Hassocks soon appeared in answer to his message, but Jack soon found, rather to his disgust, that Mr. Hassocks was an extremely cautious man. He knew, of course, all the people about whom Jack asked him, but he was very guarded in what he said concerning them. The fact was, Mr. Hassocks was consumed with curiosity to know who Jack was; that a stranger should take up his abode at the "Oxenford Arms," unless he was evidently a stray commercial traveller, was an event outside Mr. Hassocks' experience ever since he had ruled over that establishment. Still, port is a heady wine, and by the time they had entered upon the second bottle, the tongue of the host of the "Oxenford Arms" was considerably loosened. Jack had ascertained that old Dr. Elmsley still ruled over the High School; that Jackson, the butcher, had been gathered to his fathers; and that Jackson, his son, reigned in his stead; and then at last Jack enquired after poor little Bobby Cuttlestone.

"Ah, sir," replied the landlord, "you know Mr. Cuttlestone? Extraordinary man, sir. Singular case of late development."



THE SECOND BOTTLE LOOSENED THE TONGUE OF THE HOST OF THE "OXENFORD ARMS"

"What do you mean? Mr. Cuttlestone! Late development! What are you driving at? The poor little chap, I mean, hadn't the pluck to push his way in this world."

"Well, sir," replied Mr. Hassocks, "all I can say is, that if Mr. Cuttlestone can't push his way in this world I don't know who can; and, as for pluck, well, just you ask any one in Slatterly about that."

"Well," thought Jack, "this can't be the Bobby Cuttlestone I mean. There's another fellow I used to know here," he said, at length, "chap bound to get on. I've not the slightest doubt he's one of the leading men of Slatterly. Big Joe Bainbridge, 'Stunning Joe' as we used to call him. What's he doing? 'Farming,' I suppose."

"Oh, Bainbridge," said Mr. Hassocks, somewhat contemptuously. "No, he quitted that business some time ago; he couldn't stand the chaff of the markets, you see."

"Chaff of the markets!" ejaculated Pinkney. "I should have thought Joe Bainbridge could have held his own anywhere at that sort of game, and what's more would have been a dangerous man to chaff if he didn't like it."

"A wind bag, sir, a mere wind bag, that's what Bainbridge was; and when you prick a wind bag it collapses, and that's what Bainbridge did. It's rather a long story, but if you knew anything about those two years ago it might amuse you to hear it."

"I should like it of all things," replied Jack; "we are a long way off the bottom of the bottle as yet, help yourself and fire away."

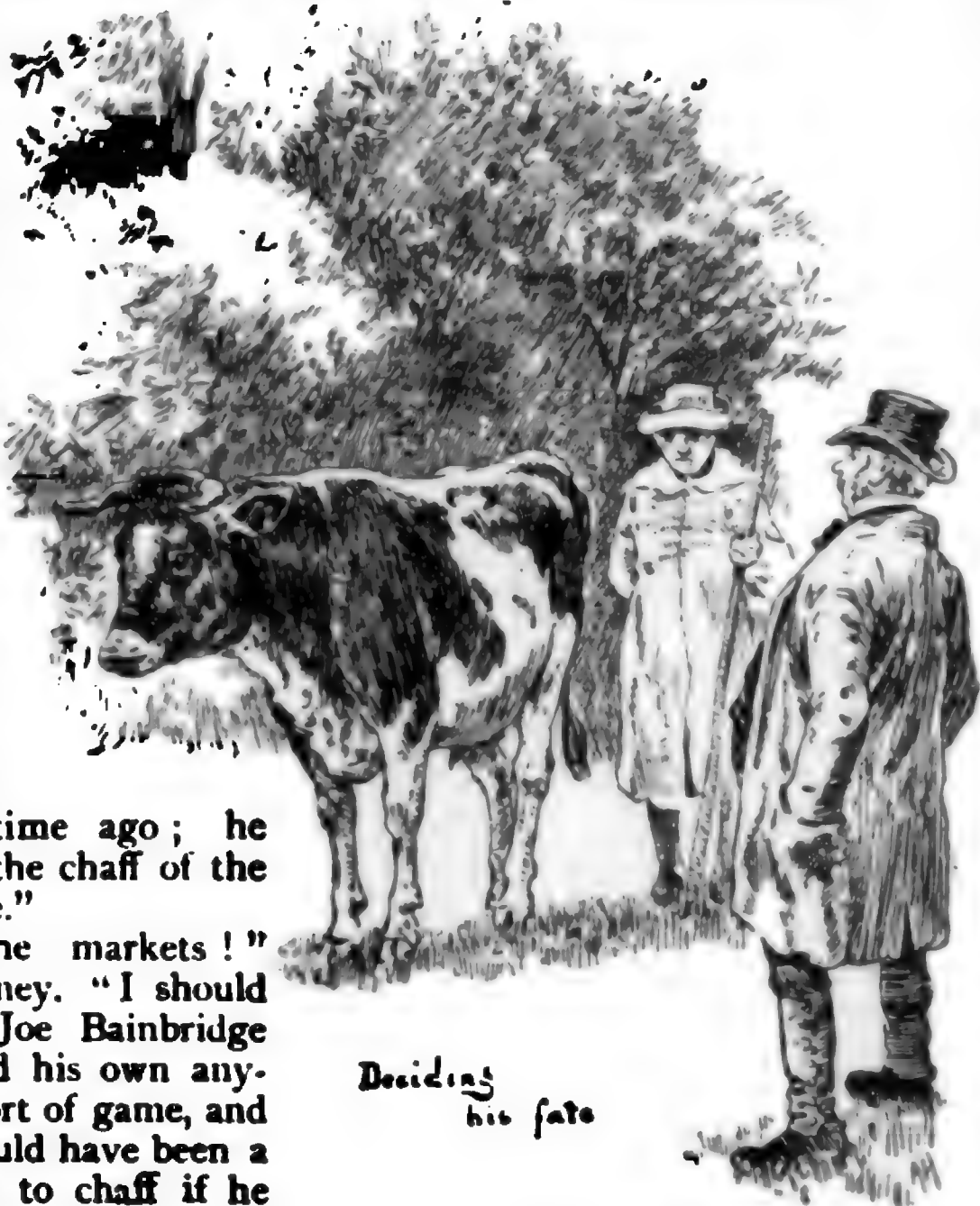
Having complied with his guest's request, Mr. Hassocks, without further prelude, commenced to "fire away."

"Bainbridge, as soon as he was old enough to set up for himself, took a farm,

and very speedily made himself a very prominent man in the parish. I can't say exactly what he was as a boy, because he was a bit before my time; but he was a very bumptious, domineering young man. Still, he had any amount of energy and 'go,' and he cared nothing about anybody but himself. He got on to the Local Board, he got on to the vestry; in fact there wasn't a pie in the parish but what he had got his finger in it. He snubbed people right and left; old men, elders of the parish, so to

speak, and who had been on these boards for years, he pronounced old fogies who ought to be superannuated. He carried the younger men with him, and there is no doubt he did deal of good about the roads, the lighting of them, and those sort of things, but if he had a strong party with him, there can be no doubt about it he was more feared than liked; in short, his rude, overbearing manner made a great many of the people positively detest him. How-

ever, in spite of all his 'go,' he didn't seem altogether to prosper in his own affairs. I suppose it was owing to its being bad times for farming; but, prominent position though he had taken in the parish, it was rumoured that Bumptious Bainbridge was not making money. However, his neighbour, old Dobson, was a warm man. He had farmed on a large scale, and not only made lots of money in the good old times, but kept it, and, having given up two-thirds of his land, only farmed enough now to amuse himself. Bainbridge was said to be nuts on Polly Dobson, and, as she was the old man's only child, she was a catch worth winning, and Bainbridge was reported to have said that he should make it a pretty considerable



Deciding
his fate

personal matter to anybody attempting to come between him and Polly."

"Ah, I understand," said Pinkney, "and I can fancy a good many chaps would think twice before provoking a turn up with 'Stunning Joe.'"

"Well, sir," continued the landlord, "all this time Mr. Cuttlestone had been trying at all sorts of things, but it didn't seem as if he could make a hand of any of them. After a succession of failures he left Slatterly, and it was some few years before we saw him again. Then he came back, and commenced business as a draper. It was only in a small way at first, but he soon began to get on; and, after a bit, the Slatterly ladies quite took him up, and he bid fair to be quite the leading mercer in the place. He was a quiet, civil little fellow that everybody liked, and people often wondered how it was he allowed himself to be so brow-beaten by Joe Bainbridge. He was a bully, that Bainbridge; it seems he had always bullied little Cuttlestone as a boy at school, and he kept it up now. I don't know whether you ever noticed it, sir, but you come across this occasionally where a man who bullied another as a boy, continues it afterwards. Any way, it was so here. Well, as you know, sir, there's no accounting for a woman's tastes. Like the other ladies of Slatterly, Miss Dobson did a good deal of shopping at Cuttlestone's, in fact, rumour began to be busy about the frequency of her visits there, and ill-natured tongues declared that she was never out of the shop, and what could she find to buy there, or what could she see in him? A nice, quiet little man, if you will, but he really wasn't much to look at. And, then, didn't all the town know that she could have Joe Bainbridge by holding up her finger. Something like the figure of a man Mr. Bainbridge, a big fellow with such lovely black eyes, &c. His admirers little guessed how black they were destined to be shortly.

"It naturally wasn't long before all this talk came to Bainbridge's ears, and in the first instance he only laughed at it. The notion was too absurd; the idea of little Bobby falling in love with anyone tickled Joe Bainbridge exceedingly, but that he should be casting sheep's eyes at dashing Polly Dobson was really too ridiculous. He must speak to Polly about it; it was too bad of her to be making a fool of poor little Bobby. It might be amusement for her, but it was death to him. He had always taken care of little Bobby, had always

stood up for him, and he must take care of the poor little chap still. He wouldn't see him put upon if he could help it. Now, nobody could recollect any one particular occasion in which Mr. Bainbridge had ever stood up for Cuttlestone; on the contrary, he never seemed to lose an opportunity of snubbing him, or jeering at him, and indeed the way in which Cuttlestone was prospering had caused him to be bitterer and more insolent to the mercer of late than ever. You see, sir, as he throve, Mr. Cuttlestone was asked to take part in the affairs of the parish, and somehow his views of things never seemed to be the same as Bainbridge's, and Joe, in his domineering way, was always trying to override him and getting very angry upon finding Mr. Cuttlestone had the courage to stand to his opinions.

"I don't know whether you're a married man, sir; never had any matrimonial experiences myself, but I've always understood that if you're courting a young woman, it's a rather dangerous thing to tell her she's flirting with anyone else and that you're not going to have it. Any way, as the story goes, Bainbridge didn't find it a success.

Miss Dobson was a spirited young woman, and although Joe was an acknowledged,



BAINBRIDGE BULLIED LITTLE CUTTLESTONE



BAINBRIDGE RUSHED AT CUTTLESTONE.

and, undoubtedly, a favoured admirer, yet it seems he was making a little too certain, quite to please her. She had also heard that he had threatened to make it a personal quarrel with any man who might attempt to rival him in her good graces, and Miss Polly, it was said, had turned her head and laughed, and said that Mr. Bainbridge had yet to show he was the best man in England, that she wasn't engaged to him, and that it wasn't likely that she should be angry with any young man who thought her pretty telling her so. I don't know whether Joe had ever heard these sentiments of her's, probably not, or he wouldn't have taken her to task about her visits to Cuttlestone's shop. What passed between them exactly nobody knows, but they'd a violent quarrel over it, and Miss Dobson was reported to have said that such big talkers were seldom big doers, and that if Mr. Bainbridge interfered in her affairs, it was quite likely that he'd be very sorry for it. This just made Bainbridge wild, and he resolved to step down and snuff out Cuttlestone at once. There were two or three people in the shop when he got there, but he didn't mind that, but said at once in his most blustering tones:

"Look here Bobby, I've got something to say to you that won't keep. It won't take above two or three minutes. Just show me somewhere where I can have a word with you."



BUMPTIOUS BAINBRIDGE.

"In one moment," replied Cuttlestone, and, as soon as he had finished with the customers he was attending to, he asked Bainbridge to step outside on to the pavement in front.

"Now, Bobby," exclaimed Bainbridge, 'I've just got one thing to say to you. It's been whispered to me that you've been making sheep's eyes at Miss Dobson. Now, of course, she's only amusing herself with you, but I'm going to marry that young woman, and I don't choose to have it.'

"And, Bainbridge," said Bobby quietly, 'I'm not going to have it either. I shall talk to any young ladies that are good enough to talk to me without asking any leave of yours.'

"For a moment Bainbridge stood perfectly aghast. He could hardly believe his ears.

"If I catch you speaking again to Miss Dobson I'll knock your ugly little head off," he said at last.

"You had better do it at once," retorted Cuttlestone, and quick as thought his coat was off, and he was dancing about on the pavement with his fists up in front of Bainbridge.

"As soon as he recovered from his astonishment, Joe gave a growl and rushed at him like a wild beast, only to receive a real nasty one in the face. Catch him he couldn't. The little man was like an eel, and kept dancing round him, and hitting him apparently pretty well where he liked. After about two minutes Bainbridge stopped, bleeding and exhausted, and muttering incoherent threats. By this time a crowd had collected, and some of them called out to Cuttlestone to come away, that Bainbridge was too big for him, etc., but Bobby only answered that he thought he 'could manage,' and when the bystanders looked at the two men, they began to think he could too. A very few minutes and it was all over. Bumptious Bainbridge, with his face cut all to ribbons, slunk crest-fallen away, and Cuttlestone, having put on his coat, returned to his occupation of selling gloves and ribbons over the counter. There, sir, that was virtually the end of Joe Bainbridge. He was a wind-bag who had been pricked. Those who saw the fight say he cut up a most arrant cur, and didn't even take his thrashing like a man. It was some time before he was seen about again, and then all the bounce had been taken out of him. He was so chaffed and

bullied about the terrible licking *he had given little Cuttlestone*, that he hardly dared to show his face, and he has been a nonentity in the parish ever since. As for Miss Dobson, she married Cuttlestone a few months afterwards. She said, I am told, that there is no help for it, that the princess always had to marry the knight who killed the 'dragon that guarded her. I don't know what she meant exactly, but she always was too poetical for my taste."

"Well, thanks for your story, Mr. Hassocks," said Jack. "It's getting about time to go to bed; but I hardly understand how little Bobby Cuttlestone

managed to thrash 'Stunning Joe' so easily."

"They say," replied the landlord, "that while he was away Mr. Cuttlestone had not only thoroughly learnt the drapery business, but also the use of his hands. And then, you see, that Bainbridge, he always had a soft drop in him. Anyhow, Mr. Cuttlestone's about the leading man of the town now, and as for the t'other, he's of no account; looks as if he had shrunk to about half his size, to my thinking." And having lit his guest's candle, Mr. Hassocks once more wished him good night, and sought his own pillow.



"SHE ALWAYS WAS TOO POETICAL FOR MY TASTE."



S. Allegro vivo. *p*

1. 'Twas
2. While

PIANO. *ff* *mf* *p*

p

not for one short sum - mer We clasp'd im - mor - tal hands, Our
 wave - lets crest the o - cean, And dais - ies deck the glade, I

p

lives are in - ter - wov - en With ten - der lov - ing bands; Thro'
 on - ly live to love thee, In sun - light or in shade; Thy

cresc. *scen.* *do.*

'Time's un-trod-den path - way, My feet shall beat with thine,.... My
 smile shall be my sun - shine, My heart thy changeless home,..... My

cresc. *scen.* *do.*

2 *f* *cres.*

love will live for ev - er, My heart hath found its shrine,..... My
 love will live for ev - er, Wher - e'er thy feet may roam, My

f *cres.*

ff *1st time. D.S.*

love will live for ev - er, For ev - er I am thine!
 love will live for ev - er, What ev - er chang - es

ff *rit.*

2nd time. pp

Come! 3. When, in the mys - tic fu - ture, the graves of both are green, And

pp

rall.

shades of death have bal - low'd What ev - er might have been;— No

rall.

a tempo primo. *p* *f* *dim.*

dark-en'd glass to sev - er, But know - ing as we're known..... We'll

p *f* *dim.*

f *cres.*

live and love for ev - er, When thou art all mine own..... We'll

f *cres.*

ff *cres.*

live and love for ev - er, Where love shall live. Where love..... shall live, Where

ff *cres.*

ad lib. *ff*

love..... shall live..... a - lone!

ff *ad lib.*



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